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IT IS only by labor that thought can be made healthy, and only by thought that labor can be made happy; and the two cannot be separated with impunity.—*Ruskin.*

"HEREDITY may determine a man's trials but not his character." God does not enslave a man's life by the deeds of his forefathers, and to every man is given the opportunity to make a deliberate choice between good and evil. Environment and heredity may determine the special form of evil which allures, but there is ever inherent in man the power to choose.

FEW men have been better qualified to testify to the value of fame than President Roosevelt. In a recent address he declared that, "It is better to be faithful than to be famous." This is a truth that many a young man forgets, and in an effort to obtain fame he loses all that makes life worth living. There are not many men to whom God can entrust fame, but it is the privilege of all to be faithful.

THE Northfield Summer Bible School has at its inception demonstrated that it has met a real need for consecutive Bible teaching. At the opening session on July 1, the attendance was large, and it has steadily continued to grow during the month. Ministers, Bible-class teachers, and Christian workers have testified to their deep appreciation of the several courses. As we go to press the attendance has already exceeded five hundred and the interest has been continually deepening and with such lecturers as Revs. G. Campbell Morgan, W. W. White, John Kelman, and C. I. Scofield, the reason is not far to seek.

THE recent Student Conference at Northfield is the largest that has ever been held there. There have been no less than 764 delegates from all parts of the country. Particularly encouraging is the large attendance from Harvard College, which is seven or eight times as large as in former years. The meetings have followed the same course as hitherto. The list of speakers has been of a good size, including men from every section. John Kelman, M. A., of Edinburgh was heard for the first time from the Northfield platform—for the first time in America, for that matter—and won immediate recognition, being one of the most popular speakers ever heard at the convention. Other popular speakers were President Woodrow Wilson, of Princeton, G. Campbell Morgan, whose Bible class (apart from the Conference work) grew daily in popularity, and Mr. Robert E. Speer. The famous author of "Black Rock" and "The Sky Pilot," the Rev. Chas. Gordon, came on from Chicago for one evening and was listened to with the deepest interest. The more secular features of the conference were, as usual, heartily enjoyed, especially the oration of President Wilson on the Fourth. The athletics, under the charge of George Chadwick, the captain of the Yale foot ball team, were well arranged and furnished a pleasant diversion for the afternoons.

The leaders of the Conference have

realized the importance of the spiritual as compared with the technical and mechanical, more of late years, and the Conferences have grown in consequence, both in numbers and in usefulness. The singing this year was led by Mr. George C. Stebbins. Mr. John R. Mott was in the chair.

THE report of the principal of Mount Hermon School shows that the past year of the school has better fulfilled the demand for which it was founded than any previous year of its history. Almost without exception the men of the graduating class were self-supporting. Their character has been borne witness to by one college president who wrote: "The boys prepared at Mount Hermon School have been such superior students both in scholarship and character that I desire to offer to the school three honorary scholarships for free tuition for four years."

Hermon men are Y. M. C. A. presidents at Williams and Lehigh, one is a secretary at Brown, and one is in charge of the Yale Mission. The classes in the past four years have more than doubled in size.

The average student spends two years at Hermon, and his age is two months over twenty years. This is about the average of the college man. The popular idea that Mount Hermon is a divinity school is shown to be erroneous by the fact that not more than forty in the entire school look forward to the ordained ministry as a life work. But a much greater number are hoping to become missionaries and Christian workers. Over forty per cent of the students come from villages of not one thousand inhabitants. The enrollment for the entire year was seven hundred and twenty-five, and beside our own home land over twenty-seven different countries have been represented.

These figures will be seen to mean much if they are studied, for they show conditions which probably do not exist elsewhere in the world. The school where two-thirds of the students are either wholly, or in part, supporting themselves, and are of the age of twenty bespeaks a body of earnest men, and the fact that such a large number come from small country towns is sufficient evidence that they come from surroundings where they would be unable to receive the benefits they derive at the school.

And that they go back to these towns afterwards, broadened and strengthened speaks well for the future of the land. The report besides showing the attainment of the aims, is interesting for the wealth of statistics which have been compiled from the students and carefully arranged.

The report from Miss Hall, principal of the Seminary, is as encouraging as Mr. Cutler's. The school has numbered four hundred and five girls in the past year. It is a tribute to the efficiency of the staff that not one case of serious illness has occurred during the year, although the town itself has had several epidemics. This may be partly due to the work of the gymnasium. Statistics—not always deceiving—show very plainly that there has been a very marked improvement in the students, owing to the proper use of this building, which is under a very able instructress.

One-fifth of the girls are farmers' daughters; next in proportion are the daughters of missionaries and ministers from small country towns. Almost every occupation is represented among the parents of the students. The average age is eighteen. One sentence from the report is characteristic and shows how unique the position is, "But simply to be poor is not enough to recommend one to the Northfield Seminary." The aims of the girls are interesting. Forty-six wish either to be missionaries, or to engage in some active Christian work, and thirty-five wish to be trained nurses.

The following extract is given, not because it is exceptional, but because it is characteristic. The person referred to is one for whom application for admittance has been made. *"The place she lives in is fourteen miles from any railroad or village.* There is no church and there are no religious services of any kind ever held in the town. It comes the nearest to being a heathen place that I could imagine in New England."

It may easily be imagined that the hardest part of a principal's duty is the refusing admittance of worthy candidates, and yet two have to be turned away for every one who is admitted, so numerous are the applications.

STUDIES IN THE EPISTLES OF PETER.

Rev. J. H. Jowett, M. A.

THROUGH ANTAGONISMS TO PERFECTNESS.

"Your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." 1 *Peter v. 8.*

"The devil . . . . . walketh about, seeking whom he may devour!" Peter's memory is here helping Peter's message. Reminiscence is shaping his counsel. It does seem as though at times this apostle dips his pen in his own blood. At any rate, the living crimson of his own experence abundantly colors the page. The epistle is hortatory; it is also biographical. The document is alive. It unfolds a faith; it also records a pilgrimage. In the passage which is immediately before us one feels how the life emerges as the commentary upon the message. Let me for a moment identify portions of this dim background, and set them in relation to the text. Here is the foreground, "God . . . . who hath called you!" Here is the background, "And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me!" Here is the text, "Be watchful!" Here is the context, "Simon, Simon, sleepest thou? Couldst thou not watch one hour?" Here is the warning, "Your adversary, the devil . . . . walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." Here is the reminiscence, "Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have thee." Here is the evangel, "The God of all grace . . . . will make you perfect." Here is the experience, "Thou art Simon (hearer), thou shalt be Peter," a rock! I say that this man's life-blood stains his speech. His words are life, not the expression of speculation, but the utterance of a travail, the ripe judgments of a man who has "known and felt." And now he lays down his pen for a moment and surveys his checkered days. He notes the innumerable allurements which have beset his path. He recalls the gay fascinations, the incentives to pride, the love of power, the bewitchment of personal ambition. He marks the violence of vice, the tempestuous charge of passion, the terrific onrush of the blind and brutal forces of persecution. And all these confront the lonely way-farer as he picks his way towards God! Life abounds in moral antagonisms. The empire of devilry runs right up to our gates. The destructive mouth is open on every side. The flesh lusts against the spirit! Life is filled with moral menace! All this the apostle sees as he contemplates his own pilgrimage, and so he takes up his pen again and writes this warning to his young, inexperienced, and somewhat willful readers, "Your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour."

I think there is something very suggestive in the figures employed by the Bible to describe the approaches of the powers of evil and night. The devil has a fairly extensive wardrobe, but his common and more familiar guises are of three types:—a serpent, an angel of light, and a roaring lion. It is in one or other of these three shapes that the forces of sin most frequently assail us. They come in the guise of the serpent! They beguile our senses. They pervert our judgment. They enchant our imaginations. We are fascinated, bewitched, paralyzed, by the influence of some illicit and unclean spell. The love of money becomes a fascination. It holds a man as under a wizard's spell. Gambling becomes a bewitchment, a kind of spiritual bondage, in which the poor soul, in mesmerized inclinations, is slowly drawn towards its own destruction. The devil approaches as a serpent, and like fixed and stupefied birds we are in peril of dropping into his devouring

jaws! He comes also in the guise of an angel of light! He poses as an evangelist! He plays the role of one whose ministry it is to deepen our conception of the love and graciousness of God. We do not think highly enough of God! He loves us too much to be pained by our small neglects! In fact, we best show our confidence in God by disregarding these neglects! Our trust is altogether too elementary and strait! We should cast ourselves down from a few pinnacles and display to all men what a wonderful confidence we have in the out-stretched everlasting arms of God! Such is the devil as an angel of light! Such is the devil as the preacher of the exceeding breadth of our Father's love! Such is the devil, intent on easing the strain on our religious life, relaxing its severities, and putting our feet into the way of a more spacious providence and peace. He would turn religion into thin refinements; he would convert a deep devotion into a plausibility; and he would transform a hallowed trust into light and flippant presumption. And the devil also comes as a roaring lion! The *subtlety* of the serpent is laid aside; he discards the sheen of the angel of light; he appears as sheer brutal force, an antagonist of terrific and naked violence, bearing down his victims under the heavy paws of relentless persecution. When the apostle wrote this letter the lion was about; Nero was at work; the Christians were being hunted unto death, in the vain attempt at stamping out their faith and devotion to the Man of Nazareth, their Saviour and their Lord! He comes as a serpent, as an angel of light, as a roaring lion! He came to the Master as a serpent when he offered Him worldly power. He came as an angel of light when he sought to deepen and enrich His trust. He came to Him as a roaring lion in the blows and blasphemies of the blood-thirsty multitude. This antagonism we have got to meet. How can we meet it in the hope of certain triumph? Let us turn to the apostle's counsel.

"Be sober." The culture of sobriety! See to it that you are not intoxicated, drugged into any kind of perilous stupor. Keep your head clear. Be collected. "Be sober." Now, the apostle is writing to men and women, who are professedly the followers of Jesus Christ; and I think there are two perils in the religious life which have their issue in moral stupor. We can lose our senses in excitement, and we can lose them in sleep. There are perils in sensationalism, and there are perils in an encroaching drowsiness. There is the stupor which accompanies exaggeration, and there is the stupor of indifference. There is an excessive emotionalism which offers no barriers against the incursions of the devil. That is the peril of all revivals. Men may "lose their heads," and their very excitement fosters a moral drowsiness which gives hospitality to the besetting forces of temptation and sin. It is among the highly emotional races that we find the profoundest moral sleep. "Be sober." If your spirit be fervent, at all pains let it be clear. "The spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets." And on the other side there is the moral stupor which is the issue of a growing indifference, frequently initiated by small neglects. A man neglects the pointing of his house; damp enters, chills are born; disease is invited; death reigns. Relaxation in trifles is often the beginning of moral benumbment. Or it may be that a Christian man begins to take his pleasures in injurious measure. He used to sojourn in them; now he lives in them. "He that *liveth* in pleasure is dead." The helpful potion has become an illicit drug. Taken in homœopathic doses the pleasure was a tonic and restorative; taken in larger measure it became an opiate, and sunk the life in perilous sleep. Whether our stupor be occasioned by excitement, or by neglect, or by dram-drinking, whether of alcoholic liquor or of drugging delights, such stupor gives the devil his opportunity, and offers him an open field in which his triumph is inevitable. "Be sober!"

"Be watchful." The culture of perceptiveness! Not only be sober, but thoroughly awake, exercising your perceptions to the rarest and most fruitful refinement. We know the large possibilities which allure us in the cultivation of the physical senses; equally large possibilities glow before us in the culture of the soul. Every exercise of watchfulness ensures us stronger sight. In the quest of the Divine we come to self-possession. In this line of culture the progress is from the greater to the less. The moral senses perceive ever finer and finer essences both of good and evil. Moral progress is in the direction of the scruple. The finest scholar in the school of Christ is he who has the rarest perception of the moral trifle. "He that doeth the *least* of these commandments is greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven." Therefore, exercise thy moral senses, lest the hordes of evil should enter through the gates of unperceived neglect. "Be watchful."

"Stedfast in the faith." The culture of faith! Our faith has to be "stedfast," firm, solid, impenetrable like a wall! Our faith has to be "stedfast," a rampart of assurance, close, compact and invulnerable. I have spoken of the cultivation of the moral sense, and of its progress in the detection of the trifle. Here we are taken to a plane of still higher education, the culture of the spiritual sense, the apprehension of God, proceeding toward the goal of calm and invincible assurance. To be stedfast in faith is to be sure of God. The grand attainment necessitates continual exercise, the "practice of the presence of God." We must exercise our spiritual muscles in the ministry of communion with God, in praise and prayer and supplication and intercession; the exercise must be a wrestling, determined and continuous, until there steals into our life an awed sense of the Divine Presence, an unmistakable power, and in the calmness of assurance we can confidently say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." How, then, shall we resist the devil, in whatsoever guise he may appear to us? By the culture of sobriety; by the culture of moral perceptiveness; and by that culture of spiritual apprehension which will lead us into the peace which is strength, "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding."

Now, let me carry your minds forward a moment to the contemplation of *the all-sufficient dynamic* which may be ours in this inevitable conflict with the powers of evil and night. The culture of sobriety, the culture of perceptiveness, the culture of faith will open out our lives to Him, Whom the apostle calls "the *God of all grace,"* and by His presence we shall be energized. "The God of all grace!" It is a beautiful and wealthy phrase, suggestive of varied endowment for varied and changing need. My need is manifold; the grace of God is also "manifold." It will fit itself to my need as light or heat, as water or bread. My God is "the God of all grace," now like sweet sunshine, now like burning flames, now like refreshing dew, now like the falling softening rain. "The God of all grace," a tower and a sword, my refuge and my shield! "My grace is sufficient for thee;" sufficient amid the beguilements and fascinations of the serpent; sufficient amid the plausible refinements of the angel of light; sufficient amid the apparently destructive forces of the lion of violence and persecution. Thy whole personality, in every faculty and power, shall be pervaded with Divine forces, and in thy God thou shalt find an exuberant fountain of mercy, goodness and compassion. "My God shall make all grace to abound towards you."

And what is to be the ultimate glory? *"The God of all grace . . . . shall Himself perfect, establish, strengthen you."* Perfected! Established! Strengthened! Settled! They are all architectural metaphors, and are massed together to suggest the fine wholeness, consistency, finish and security of the grace-blessed character as it will appear upon the glorious fields of light. "Perfected," completely

jointed like the timbers of a building! "Established," every layer firmly and securely based! "Strengthened," splendidly seasoned, with no danger of splitting or warping! "Settled," the entire structure resting evenly, comfortably, upon the best and surest foundation! These are the metaphors, and they unveil before me future attainments of blessedness, when the grace-filled character shall appear before God like a firm, well-finished and gloriously proportioned building; all the manifold faculties co-operating in rare association; every power firm, decisive and sanctified; and the entire life settled in holy calm and comfort on "the one foundation, Jesus Christ our Lord."

Now let us see the glorious range of the entire passage! "The God of all grace, who hath called you to His eternal glory." That glory is not altogether remote! Even now we are beginning to share it! The spring is not yet here, but the lark is up! Glory awaits us in Emmanuel's land, but we are finding heavenly tokens by the way.

> "The men of grace hath found
> Glory begun below."

See, I say, the range of it all! "Called." . . . . "Perfected! Established! Strengthened! Settled!" And between these two extremes, the call and the attainment, is a space of conflict and suffering, of triumph and joy. *"After that ye have suffered a little while."* "A little while!" It is a reminiscence. "A little while and ye shall see me." "Ye are called!" Now, "a little while," of chastening, of discipline, of light affliction! Then, we shall see "face to face," and "shall know even as also we are known."

TYPES OF TEMPTATION: "HE IS ABLE."

Rev. Handley C. G. Moule, D. D.

We have touched upon the surroundings of the subject of victory and triumph, "against the devil, the world, and the flesh." Briefly, simply, solemnly, thankfully, let us come to recollect the center of the subject.

"My grace is sufficient for thee," says the personal Lord Jesus Christ (2 Cor. xii. 9). "If you by the Spirit do to death the deeds of the body, you shall live," says St. Paul (Rom. viii. 13). "He is able to keep you from stumbling," says St. Jude (24).

The whole Bible, read aright, with eyes which have once got a view of the great truth of the conquering and keeping power of God, is full of this infinitely practical message. It is constantly illustrated in that great picture lesson, the history of Israel. It shines out at every turn in the Psalms. It is the message of the Prophets; the Lord of the Covenant will *Himself*, they tell us (Jer. xxxi. 33), "write his law in the hearts" of His people. The Gospels are one vast illustration of the words, "Believe ye that *I am able* to do this?" (Matt. ix. 28.) And so are "the Acts," that precious record not so much of the "acts of the Apostles," as of those of the exalted Lord, in them and through them. The epistles expound it and apply it in a hundred ways. The Revelation shows "this same Jesus" to us, waiting at the door (Rev. iii. 20), to enter in, and be both Guest and Lord of the soul, "subduing all things to himself."

Our victory over temptation, *in every form,* is to be His, that it may be ours. While we "watch, and are sober," our resource is, not our watching and waking, but Jesus Christ, made by the Spirit our absolute Ruler, and so our divine and victorious Keeper.

And our way of bringing His blessed power to bear, what is it? "This is the victory, even our faith" (1 John v. 4). And what is our faith? It is our simplest possible re-

liance, in the "confidence of self-despair,"* upon the promise and action of God in Christ. To put it otherwise, it is Christ trusted. That simple phrase may be a help to us, for it reminds us that not even the faith is the agent, but the Lord. Faith is but the voice calling Him in, the hand held out empty for His gift of presence and of peace. The gift is all His own. It is Himself.

Faith's action may take innumerable varying forms. A friend once told me, that long ago, in the strong temptations of youth, he often found great deliverance given through the simple utterance of the words, "Jesus Christ." It was no incantation; it was a reliance, expressed as briefly, as urgently, as possible. But no incantation in tale or fable could act more wonderfully. Again, faith may express itself without even that brief word; it may be just the attitude of the soul, just its look, as the man goes on in peace, without a pause, in the path of duty—and of victory. Or again, it may be the most deliberate and articulate telling out to the Lord the whole of a need, the whole circumstances of an anxiety, the complex conditions of a tempting, endangering position, and the solemn committal of the soul to Him, in well-doing. It may be the act of a moment, for some acute crisis. It may be (nay, it must be, if we are to live for Christ indeed) the habit of the day, the breath of life.

What then is the supreme requisite to "the victory of faith," to the peace, and the holiness of heart, which are to be thus by faith received? It is that our eyes should rest not upon the receiving faith but upon Him Whom it receives. Would we have great faith, which shall "protect us in all dangers, and carry us through all temptations"? We must seek, in the Word of God, in the light of the Blessed Spirit, for a simple sight of our great Saviour. The secret of innermost victory, and release, and security, is not a desperate effort of our moral powers. It is such a view of Him as shall make it a simple and most instinctive action to "commit the keeping" of our whole being to such supremely competent hands. Christ truly seen cannot but be Christ trusted. Christ trusted is inmost purity and peace, when we look to Him to be so, even as we found Him our perfect pardon, our blessed righteousness, our Jehovah-Tsidkenu, when we looked to Him for that, and laid humble claim to the merit of His atoning sacrifice.

Dear friend and reader, tempted in any point, and conscious of the depth and mystery of temptation, let us, as fellow-sinners, in our common need, and with our "common salvation" (Jude 3), just "look" again "unto Jesus." Let us freely "tell Him all." Have we not come to the end of ourselves? Then it is time that we came to the beginning of what "Jesus Himself" can be to us.

He is a Worker supremely Personal. So He knows how to manipulate our perplexing personal hearts. He "understands our thought long before," and can apply Himself to its struggles, and bring them into the repose of His love. He perfectly sees our whole circumstances. He can modify them, if He will, for He is Lord. Anywise, He can so stand at the center of them with us that we shall be "in the secret of His presence" even there, and meet everything in Him.

Apart from Him, now and to the last, we are, we shall be, "miserable sinners," ready to fall at every step. With Him and by means of Him, the trusted Christ, we really shall be "more than conquerors."

* "Yield to me now, for I am weak,
But confident in self-despair."
C. WESLEY: *Wrestling Jacob.*

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR TOPICS.

Ida Q. Moulton.

THE CALL TO SEPARATION.

(August 3, 2 Corinthians vi. 14-18; 1 John ii. 15-17.)

"Be ye separate." How? By our aims and purposes. By our conversation and actions. By a consistent Christian life regulated by the commands of Christ. By a righteousness which is not only right without but within. By filling our hearts so full of heavenly sentiments and precepts, that there 'll be no room for those of the world. "Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

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It is a common saying among Hindoos, "I do as ten men do." Many Christians act upon the same principle. What are others doing? is a question far too often upon their lips. Nowhere in Christ's life or sayings is there a suggestion we should follow any other but Himself. He lived in this world and yet not of it, because He lived in accordance with God's will. Think you He possessed a power that you cannot have? Ah, no! Power over all flesh was given Him that He might give us eternal life (John xvii. 2). And that life is gained alone by doing His will (John ii. 17). Then let our motto be, "I do as Jesus would like to have me do."

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It is related that a distinguished divine once rode in a coach with a nobleman and a female passenger. The nobleman entered into an improper conversation with the woman and coachman. At a favorable moment, the divine leaned towards the nobleman and whispered, "My lord, maintain your rank." Thus the voice of God whispers to us, Christian, maintain your rank. Draw a line between the clean and unclean. Maintain a separateness from sin. The price of such a life is eternal vigilance, but we have a never failing bank to draw upon. If we are the sons and daughters of God we are not of this world (John xvii. 16). Therefore let us maintain our position.

Belials are in every path. There is no profession or trade, occupation or position, where they are not found. Some come to us an angel of light, acting as decoys to lead us into sin. Let one try to live the separated life, for which Christ so distinctively calls, and the cry of expediency and tolerance will come even from the pulpit, while the world will fling at us its epithet of "bigot." How to live a helpful, godly life in the midst of this world's contaminating influences and lead men to Christ is a question of no small moment to the Christian. There is a way. Fix your mind upon "the things above" and be ever conscious that sin is around you, "praying always."

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It is said that the bird of paradise always flies against the wind, and thus it keeps its beautiful plumage unruffled and unspoiled. Heaven's wind is against all worldliness. Let us face it, fly against it and thus keep ourselves "unspotted from the world."

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A traveler was once asked if he did not admire the structure of some grand building. "No," he replied, "for I've been at Rome, where better are to be seen every day." Thus should the Christian feel towards the attractions of this world. We have been with Jesus and seen better things. With the eye of faith we have seen His dear face, with the ear of faith we have heard His loving voice. Earth has no rarer sight or sweeter music than the sight and sound of my Saviour's face and voice. They alone are a clarion call to a life of separation.

A SUGGESTION IN ADDITION.

(August 10, 2 Peter i. 4-9.)

Add to faith virtue or courage, because this grace is associated with prayer (Psalms xxvii. 14).

Add to virtue knowledge, or true wisdom, because this grace increases our love

(1 John iv. 16). Add to knowledge temperance or self-control, because this grace governs our thoughts (2 Cor. x. 5).

Add to temperance patience or resignation, because this grace perfects our characters (James i. 4). Add to patience godliness, or God likeness, because this grace is profitable unto all things (1 Tim. iv. 8).

Add to godliness brotherly kindness, because this grace baptizes us into one spirit (1 Cor. xii. 12, 13). Add to godliness charity, because it is the crowning grace and covereth all things (1 Cor. xiii).

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A man once had a beautiful onyx, with a tinge of iron rust upon it. It seemed to him almost worthless, but he took it to an artist who engraved out of the blemish the face of a lovely woman. If through our zeal or ignorance we add blemished or useless things to our lives, the Divine Artist will transform them so they will not mar the final result. For it is not the actual things added to our lives, but our purpose in adding them that makes us useless or valuable in His sight. A figure may be almost illegible and yet retain its real value. So with our lives.

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Faith is the tap root to the tree of Christian life; diligence the trunk; virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and charity are the branches which bear "leaves for the healing of the nations" and yield fruit for the Divine Husbandman. Yes, fruitless branches may sometimes appear, but these must be cut off to add strength to the fruitful. Then fear not the saw or knife. The sealing wax of God's love will heal the bleeding spots and so work itself into the other branches that their fruit will increase an hundred fold.

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A sum in addition is solved by adding the figures upward, and proved by adding them downward. Christians should add such graces to their lives as will bring them nearer heaven, and test these graces by bringing heaven nearer others. The life of the Man of Nazareth is our model example. His rules are always "without exception." Taking Him for our example and closely following His rules will bring a correct result whichever way we add. And if we do not want a line of naughts confronting us at the close of life, let Christ be the first addition, for "without me ye can do nothing."

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"I cannot see as you have made any progress since my last visit," said a critic to Michael Angelo. "But," said the sculptor, "I've retouched this part, polished that, softened this feature, brought out that muscle."—"But these are mere trifles," interrupted the critic." "It may be so," said the artist, "but trifles make perfection, and perfection is no trifle." Perfection is the goal of the believer, and it is the spirit in which we accept and use the trifles of our lives, the little annoyances, maybe, of our daily lives, that adds or detracts from those lives, and increases or diminishes the distance to that goal.

THE LIFE OF FAITH.

(August 17, Genesis xii. 1-5; Hebrews xi. 1-6.)

Abraham had a call from God; so have we. He had a promise given him; so have we. He received a blessing; so shall we. He obeyed promptly. Do we? He took others along with him. Do we? He kept his faith through great discouragements. Do we? He made great sacrifices. Do we? He knew not where he was going, but he did know "whom he had believed." Do we know Him as we might? Do we trust Him as we should, and obey Him as we ought? Unless we can answer these questions in the affirmative we are in a critical position and there is much in this lesson for us; for "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin."

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A little boy apparently unconcerned was playing about the deck of a ship that was battling with a terrible storm. "Are you not afraid, my boy?" asked one of the passengers. "No, sir. My father is at the wheel," was the reply. Our Father is at the wheel of our lives. Don't forget that, dear burdened heart. Clouds and storms may hide His loving face. Then cling to His precious promises for "no physician ever weighed out medicine to his patient with

half so much exactness and care, as God weighs out our burdens for us. Not one grain too much is ever put into the scale."

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The story is told of a Christian schoolmaster who was brought to the rack during the persecutions of the Netherlands. They entreated him for the love of his wife and children, for his own life, to renounce his views. But he said, "Were the earth a globe of gold, and the stars all pearls, and they my own, I would give them all to have my wife and children with me though we should live in bondage on bread and water; yet neither for life, nor children, nor wife, nor earth, nor stars can I renounce Jesus, my Redeemer, in Whom I trust." He had a living power from heaven within him. He had "grasped Christ with heart" and therefore his faith could not be overthrown. Such a faith we must have if we "would see Jesus."

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"Without faith it is impossible to please God." No faith; no spiritual life, no salvation; nothing to hope for in this life, nothing to expect in the life to come. What a deplorable condition for a soul to be in. Imagination cannot paint its wretchedness, nor words portray its misery. Think of a soul existing in a realm of unbelief under the displeasure of God, afflicted and tortured by all the black, hideous torments of such a realm! Shut out of heaven! O soul for whom Christ died, believe, believe, in spite of your sins, *believe and live.*

* * * * *

"Now, Nannie, what if after all your praying, and watching, and waiting, God should suffer you to be lost?" asked a minister of a poor Scotch woman who lay dying. Raising herself on her elbow and pointing to her open Bible, she said, "Ay, dear me! is that a' the length you have got, man? God would have the greatest loss. Poor Nannie would but lose her soul, and that would be a great loss indeed; but God would lose His honor and His character. Have n't I hung my soul upon His 'exceeding great and precious promises'? And if He break His word He would make Himself a liar, and a' the universe would rush into confusion."

FREEDOM FOR SERVICE.

(August 24, 2 Timothy ii. 4; Galatians v. 1; Hebrews xii. 1, 2.)

There is no slavery so debasing as that of self-service. The most miserable beings on earth are those whose horizon is bounded by the one word *Myself.* Nought but the power of God can break the shackles of self and lead us into a spiritual independence, which is a state higher than happiness (for which we are all seeking), it is a combination of joy and blessedness. Christ frees us not alone for something better in this life but for the best earth or heaven can give. It is true the liberty of Jesus Christ binds man to duty, but it binds in love, which is the breath of a Christ freed man. (John viii. 36.)

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Mr. Moody once said, "When balloonists desire to rise higher they throw out their ballast—small bags of sand; so if we want to get nearer heaven we must throw out the sand of earth; cast aside every weight." One reason why Christians do not rise higher is they do not lay aside *every* weight. They will not give up their pet indulgences. "Such a little thing," they say, but through it their spirituality will slowly and surely leak out. Says one: "I will account no sin little, since the least works out the death of the soul. It is all one whether one is drowned in the ebb on shore or in the midst of the deep sea" (James ii. 10).

"Freedom" for blessed privileges not "for service." Who thinks of service when ministering to those they love? "I am glad of the opportunity to show you how much I love you," is in their every act. If such a spirit actuate us in our ministrations to our earthly friends, and it does, how much more should it move us to do favors for our dear Redeemer. Call it not service, but a blessed privilege, a glorious opportunity to do something for Him who has done so much for us. The benefits are all on our side. Then count it your greatest blessing to be useful to your Saviour.

"And seek to please Him whatsoever He bids thee,
Whether to do, to suffer, to lie still."

* * * * *

Let the beautiful little ermine, famed for

its purity of whiteness, teach us a lesson in living free from the "affairs of this life" and yet among them. This animal makes it his business to keep clean. It will suffer capture or face death rather than become defiled. Its attitude is, "I must keep myself free from contamination if I yield my life." So it should be our business to keep free from the "entanglements of this world." We should prefer persecutions and death rather than the defilement of sin. Our attitude should be, "I will keep myself free from the influences of Satan, pure for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, ready to obey His voice, if I yield my life."

* * * * *

A traveler passing through a village, nestling in the bosom of a great mountain, asked of a villager, "Do you have heavy thunder showers here?" "Yes," was the reply; "I have seen the lightning strike the mountain many times, I've heard thunder that shook our houses, I've seen the streams rush madly down the mountain side, but no one has ever yet been harmed here. Why, the fertility and fruitfulness of our village which you so much admire is due to these thunder showers." So you, O Christian, may need the lightning to wither your most cherished plans, the thunder of adversity, and the downpour of trials to free you from this world, but rest assured, God sees the usefulness and fertility of your life demand it. Then falter not.

COMMUNION AND TRANSFORMATION.

(August 31, Exodus xxxiv. 29-35; Luke xxviii. 29.)

It is the purpose of God to make His children stronger, better and more useful. So He permits experiences come to us that will broaden our outlook, give earthly things their real value, and inspire us to form Christian characters of the best material heaven can give. He lets a true disciple catch glimpses of Him, and the joy that is set before us that will enable us to overcome temptation, bear burdens uncomplainingly, and do Christian work faithfully, and thus change us into the image of His dear Son. Not a few of these rich experiences come to us through prayer when alone with Him.

"O Master, it is good to be
Entranced, enwrapt, alone with Thee;
Till we, too, change from grace to grace
Gazing on Thy transfigured face."

* * * * *

One writer compares Christianity to the divinely pictured windows of some grand cathedral. Viewed from without it is impossible to get any idea of their loveliness, but from within, all is changed. So those dwelling outside of Christ can have no idea of the glory and loveliness of His character. But inside the great heart of love, what a transformation. All, all love and by His grace all for us, that "our vile body" may be changed and made like "unto His glorious body."

"Flooded with splendor bright and broad
The glorious light of the loving God."

* * * * *

"This is like heaven! Oh, if I could keep this blessed experience with me all the time." These words have often been upon the lips of many as they have attended the meetings at Northfield and other religious conferences. Christian, you can keep this experience. Doubt it not. The same God Who hovers over these meetings also hovers over the field, shop, or kitchen. His transforming power may manifest itself in different forms, but it is never lost, *if it is used.* We must go down into the sinful, suffering world below, confront its evils, and lead men to Christ. Having seen Him Who has done this, having His promises with us, why need we fear? "Lo, I am with you alway."

* * * * *

It is said of Fenelon that he had such communion with God his very face shone. Lord Peterborough, a skeptic, was obliged to spend the night with him at an inn. In the morning he rushed away, saying, "If I stay another night with that man I shall be a Christian in spite of myself." Fenelon's manners were full of grace, his voice full of love, and his face full of glory. The invitation, "come to Jesus," was in every act. He was a "spiritual magnet." That is what God wants us all to be. That is what we all can be, by just yielding up all to Him, and letting Him live again in us. Under no other condition can this transforming power fulfill its mission to our souls. Are you ready for it?

"Was she well dressed?" asked one friend of another. "Yes, I am sure she was, though I did not notice what she had on. Her face shone all over her dress." The garment of holiness so enwrapped her that her face caught its radiance and made it attractively beautiful, and yet no one would take that face as a model of beauty. You have seen some like it. It had been transformed by great tribulation, but she was unconscious of any change. The angelic faces of earth's saints, like those of heaven are gained through tribulation. Let us, therefore, "glory in tribulations," which will glorify us and make us more like Jesus (Samuel v. 3-5).

Thoughts for the Quiet Hour.

AUGUST, 1902.

Friday, 1st. *Redeeming the time because the days are evil. Eph. v. 16.*

There is nothing of which we are apt to be so lavish as time, and about which we ought to be more solicitous, since without it we can do nothing in this world. Time is what we want most, but what, alas, we use worst; and for which God will most strictly reckon with us, when time shall be no more.—*William Penn.*

Saturday, 2nd. *So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God. Romans xiv. 12.*

What we inherit, strictly speaking, may be said to fix our trial, but not our fate. Every man is to be put to the proof somehow and to a certain extent his natural ancestry determines the mode of it; it depends on them, so to speak, whether his temptation is to be anger, intemperance, lust, greed, duplicity, or whatever else. But it does not depend upon them what the *issue* of this trial is to be. It depends on the man himself, and above all his faith in God.—*Prof. James Denney.*

Sunday, 3rd. *Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things unseen. Hebrews xi. 1.*

Lo, Peter is walking upon the waves! Two hands uphold him, the hand of Christ's power laid hold on him; the hand of his faith laid on the power of Christ's commanding. Had not Christ's hand been powerful, that faith had been in vain; had not that faith of his been strongly fixed upon Christ, that power had not been effectual to his preservation.—*Joseph Hall.*

Monday, 4th. *The time of my departure is at hand. 2 Tim. iv. 6.*

As I stand by the cross on the lone mountain's crest,
Looking over the ultimate sea,
In the gloom of the mountain a ship lies at rest,
And one sails away from the lea;

One spreads its white wings on a far-reaching track,
With pennant and sheet flowing free;
One hides in the shadow with sails laid aback,
The ship that is waiting for me!

But lo, in the distance the clouds break away!
The Gate's glowing portals I see;
And I hear from the outgoing ship in the bay
The song of the sailors in glee.

—*Bret Harte.*

Tuesday, 5th. *Even so the tongue is a little member and boasteth great things. James iii. 5.*

You can unlock a man's whole life if you watch what words he uses most. We have each a small set of words which, though we are scarcely aware of it, we always work with, and which really express all that we mean by life or have found out of it.—*Prof. Henry Drummond.*

Wednesday, 6th. *Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. 1 Cor. x. 12.*

Do all that you can to stand and then fear lest you may fall, and by the grace of God you are safe.—*Edwards.*

Thursday, 7th. *Whoso trusteth in the Lord, happy is he. Proverbs xvi. 20.*

He will weave no longer a spotted life of shreds and patches, but he will live with a divine unity. He will cease from what is base and frivolous in his life and be content with all places and all service he can render. He will calmly front the morrow in the negligency of that trust which carries God with it, and so hath already the whole future in the bottom of the heart. —*R. W. Emerson.*

Friday, 8th. *Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Luke xi. 4.*

When you say "lead us not into temptation," you must in good earnest mean to avoid in your daily conduct those temptations which you have already suffered from. When you say "deliver us from evil," you must mean to struggle against that evil in your hearts which you are conscious of and which you pray to be forgiven. To watch and pray are surely in our power and by these means we are certain of getting strength. You feel your weakness; you fear to be overcome by temptation. Then keep out of the way of it. This is watching. Avoid society which is likely to mislead you; flee from the very shadow of evil. You cannot be too careful.—*J. H. Newman.*

Saturday, 9th. *Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. James v. 7.*

Nothing does reason more right than the coolness of those who offer it; for truth often suffers more by the heat of its defenders than from the argument of its opposers. Zeal ever follows an appearance of truth, and the assured are too apt to be warm. But 't is their weak side in argument; zeal being better shown against sin than persons or their mistakes.—*William Penn.*

Sunday, 10th. *For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also. James ii. 26.*

Faith is the soul and good works are the breath, saith St. James. But as you see in a pair of bellows there is a forced breath without life, so in those that are puffed up with the wind of ostentation there may be charitable works without faith.—*Joseph Hall.*

Monday, 11th. *With God all things are possible. Matt. xix. 26.*

All things are possible to him who believes; they are less difficult to him who hopes; they are more easy to him who loves, and still more easy to him who perseveres in the practice of these three virtues.—*Brother Lawrence.*

Tuesday, 12th. *Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life. James i. 12.*

Remember that in trial God hath one purpose, Satan quite another. It is the soul that Satan is aiming at. Satan can make a jail look black as hell, but God can make a jail more beautiful than a palace, restraint more sweet by far than liberty.—*John Bunyan.*

Wednesday, 13th. *Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard . . . . the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. 1 Cor. ii. 9.*

The eye cannot see God, therefore the eye fails; the ear cannot hear Him, therefore it is filled with dust; but faith and love, the things that are to survive the grave, exist in their strength up to the grave.—*F. W. Robertson.*

Thursday, 14th. *What is your life? James iv. 14.*

Forenoon and afternoon and night.
Forenoon and afternoon and night. Forenoon and ——— what?
The empty song repeats itself, no more!
Yea, that is life; make this forenoon sublime,
This afternoon a psalm, this night a prayer,
And time is conquered and the crown is won.

—*E. R. Sill.*

Friday, 15th. *I am the truth. John xiv. 6.*

There is a difference between truth and veracity. Veracity—mere veracity—is a small, poor thing; truth is something greater and higher. Veracity is merely the correspondence between some particular statement and facts; truth is the correspondence between a man's whole soul and reality. It is possible for a man to say that which, unproven to him, is false; and yet he may be true; because if deprived of truth he is deprived of it unwillingly. It is possible on the other hand, for a man to utter veracities and yet at the very time that he is uttering those veracities to be false to himself, to his brother and to his God.—*F. W. Robertson.*

Saturday, 16th. *Love is the fulfilling of the law. Romans xiii. 10.*

And if you would win the world, melt it, do not hammer it. If you would grow in power, holiness, blessedness, remember this, "love is the fulfilling of the law."—*Alexander Maclaren, D. D.*

Sunday, 17th. *I will not leave you comfortless. John xiv. 18.*

I never knew what it was for God to stand by me at all times and at every offer of Satan to afflict me, as I found Him since I came in hither. As being very tender of me, He hath not suffered me to be molested, but with one Scripture and another strengthens me against all; insomuch that I have often said were it lawful I could pray for greater trouble for the greater comfort's sake.—*John Bunyan* (in Bedford Gaol).

Monday, 18th. *Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Phil. ii. 4.*

Politeness appears to be what goodness really is, and is an attitude rather than an action. Fine breeding is not the mere learning of any code of manners any more than gracefulness in the mere learning of any kind of physical exercise. The gentleman apparently as the Christian really, looks not on his own things, but on the things of others; and the selfish person is always both un-Christian and ill-bred—*Ellen T. Fowler.*

Tuesday, 19th. *The Lord rewardeth me according to my righteousness. Psalms xviii. 20.*

Nothing that the spirit does supersedes our own efforts. Unless you avail yourself of every means you think likely to maintain a healthy tone in you, you will sink exhausted. And if you really seek means of grace you will find all the earth round about you bursting up with wells of life; everything you engage in will become nourishment to your spirit; you will be chastened, encouraged, strengthened by the most unlikely means.—*Marcus Dods, D. D.*

Wednesday, 20th. *Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus. Col. iii. 17.*

The least action of life can be as surely done from the loftiest motive as the highest and noblest. Faithfulness measures acts as God measures them. True conscientiousness deals with our duties as God deals with them. "Large" or "small" are not words for the vocabulary of conscience.—*Alexander Maclaren, D. D.*

Thursday, 21st. *For me to live is Christ, to die is gain. Phil. i. 21.*

In conversion God gives to me. In consecration I give to God.—*Dr. Chalmers.*

Friday, 22nd. *Being now justified by His blood we shall be saved from wrath through him. Romans v. 9.*

I have n't been able to climb up to the height of that word "justified." Do you know what it means? It is better than pardon. Justification means that there is n't a charge against you. God says He puts them out of His memory. That is justification.—*D. L. Moody.*

Saturday, 23rd. *I said I will take heed to my ways that I sin not with my tongue. Psalms xxxix. 1.*

Abuses are like weeds, they need only toleration to spread and grow. Reforms are tender plants; they flourish only on a stubborn effort, on broken clod of patient toil, on showers of secret tears, on the irresistible sunlight of the Almighty's smile. —*Selected.*

Sunday, 24th. *So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. Psalms xc. 12.*

If there be good in that I wrought,
Thy hand compelled it, Master, Thine.
Where I have failed to meet Thy thought,
I know, through Thee, the blame is mine.

The depth and dream of my desire,
The wider paths wherein I stray,
Thou knowest, Who hast made the fire,
Thou knowest, Who hast made the clay.

Take not the vision from my ken.
O whatsoe'er may spoil or speed,
Help me to need no aid from men,
That I may aid such men as need!

—*Kipling.*

Monday, 25th. *And after the fire a still, small voice. 1 Kings xix. 12.*

Let those who try to keep their influence for Christ ponder Christ's methods of influence. Let those who live in the shade, whose lives are naturally bounded by timidity and reserve, be glad that, in the genius of Christianity, there is a place for even the gospel of the face—*Prof. Henry Drummond.*

Tuesday, 26th. *It is more blessed to give than to receive. Acts xx. 35.*

The sin of settling down on blessings we have won instead of sharing them and helping others to win them never fails to find us out.—*R. W. Barbour.*

Wednesday, 27th. *If a man abides not in me he is cast forth as a branch and is withered—if ye abide in me and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you. John xv. 6, 7.*

If you are not sure about anything shun it. There is no true living without shrinking. Every Christian has a shrinking side to his life. There are some things he utterly loathes, is heartily and wholesomely afraid of, cannot think of without a shudder. There is no fear but that this will come if you keep near Christ.—*R. W. Barbour.*

Thursday, 28th. *God is love. Luke iv. 16.*

Only in proportion as we draw near to God and are made in a measure like unto Him, can we increase our possession of love of which the entire essence is in God only.—*John Ruskin.*

Friday, 29th. *And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint. Luke xviii. 1.*

I never hear the toll of a passing bell, though in my mirth, without my prayers and best wishes for the departing spirit; I cannot go to cure the body of my patient, but I forget my profession, and call unto God for his soul; I cannot see one say his prayers but, instead of imitating him, I fall into a supplication for him, who perhaps is no more to me than a common nature: and if God hath vouchsafed an ear to my supplications, there are surely many happy that never saw me, and enjoy the blessing of mine unknown devotions. To pray for enemies, that is, for their salvation, is no harsh precept, but the practice of our daily and ordinary devotions.—*Sir Thomas Browne.*

Saturday, 30th. *The love of money is the root of all evil. 1 Tim. vi. 10.*

Remember: One act of charity will teach us more of the love of God than a thousand sermons; one act of unselfishness, or real self-denial, the putting forth of one loving feeling to the outcast and those who are out of the way, is worth more than whole volumes of the wisest writers on theology. Give, and God's reward to you will be the spirit of giving more. Give liberally somewhere in God's name and in God's cause.—*Selected.*

Sunday, 31st. *Without me, ye can do nothing. John xv. 5.*

We are conscious that our relation to Christ is not provisional and transient. Apart from Him we can do nothing in the world; apart from Him we are sure that we should be able to do nothing in the world to come. To whatever transcendent wisdom, strength, righteousness and blessedness we may rise, in the endless ages beyond death, all our perfection will be the manifestation of the infinite resources of Christ.—*R. W. Dale.*

DEVOTIONAL STUDIES IN THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL LESSONS.

Rev. F. B. Meyer.

THE TABERNACLE.

(August 3, Exodus xl. 1-38.)

How much the tabernacle was to the Jewish people! Their tents gathered around it, and its movements determined the journeys of the host. Some of the deepest thoughts about God were conveyed to them through the tabernacle, in a kind of picture language, which was best suited to their immature minds. They did not, of course, possess a language like our own, with many words and a rich vocabulary, capable of expressing the ideas of love, wisdom, purity, spirituality, and holiness. Thus, before God could make a revelation of His deepest thoughts, it was necessary for Him to provide a language or a set of symbols by which the minds of the people might be gradually prepared and led up to His revelation. This He did very largely in the construction of the tabernacle.

I. The Pattern in the Mount. When Moses reached the top of Sinai for his second sojourn there, he must have beheld some visible phenomenon, some bright apparition, some glorious picture cast on the clouds, woven out of sunbeams and rainbow mists, which seemed to stand solid on those old rocks. There was the full appearance of stakes and curtains, of cherubim and lamps, of gold and silver, of altar and candlestick; but all were impalpable—they existed as a beautiful dream, like some appearance of cloud that stands for a moment at sunset, and before a breath of wind is dispersed.

I remember Mr. Moody telling me of a sermon delivered by Dr. Andrew Bonar at Northfield that seemed to have made a great impression upon him. Dr. Bonar, in the license of the poetic fancy with which he was so richly endowed, suggested that God led Moses by the hand from point to point, and they communed with one another. Communion, of course, implicates two speakers, and therefore probably, so Dr. Bonar thought, Moses would presume to question God, and God would answer him. "What is this?" asked the great lawgiver, as they stood before the emblem of the brazen altar. "This," said Jehovah "represents the cross on which the Son of My love is to yield Himself as a whole burnt offering, and as a sin offering to put away the guilt of man." "And what is this?" asked Moses, as they stood before the laver. "This," was the reply, "typifies that daily cleaning of sin which is to be provided for man through My grace in coming years, so that at the first stain of impurity they may at once obtain cleansing." "And what is this?" was the further question of the learner receiving his first impressions of the deep things of God, as he stood before candlestick, shew-bread table, or incense altar, before the veil and the ark. To each question God gave a deep and full answer, unfolding things which eye had not seen, nor the heart of man conceived.

The pattern was comprehensive. No tassel, nor socket, nor tiny detail, was left to the fancy or ingenuity of the artificers; all was comprehended in the Divine pattern. For every detail God had a plan; because in each some purpose was hidden, and the symmetry of the whole depended upon the perfection of each part.

The plan was unfolded gradually. Probably the account of the revelation of the successive parts of the tabernacle is drawn out in such detail to indicate the gradual growth of the Divine thought, as unfolded line upon line, precept upon precept.

The plan was commensurate with the people's resources. Whatever appeared in its design had a counterpart in the property of the people. However rich the golden tapestry, however brilliant the flashing gem, however intricate the workmanship, there was nothing in the plan which was not capable of exact reproduction. God, Who knew the one, was perfectly acquainted with the other.

The plan had to be resolutely complied with. Throughout this chapter we are repeatedly told that all was done "as the Lord commanded Moses." It was his supreme joy and satisfaction neither to add to, nor diminish from, the Divine command. In every detail there was immediate and entire subservience to the suggesting of the Divine mind, which was reduplicated in the tiniest details.

All these are lessons for ourselves. The perfect pattern of our life stands clear before God. He knows every step of the pilgrimage, every line and couplet of life's poem, every insignificant detail of our life work. It is beautiful to know this. To some He shows the pattern all at once; in their childhood they get a glimpse of what He intends them to be, and from that moment, with a precise knowledge of the end to which they are working, they begin to construct. With others it is not so. God only shows to them the pattern piecemeal. Each morning He gives them some tiny thing to do, expecting them to fulfill His command, and to reproduce the inspiration of His Spirit in some practical act. These need more faith than the others. They are working more absolutely in the dark; but let them be of good cheer, for it is as true of them as of the others, that there is a plan which is being wrought out; and some day, when they reach eternity, God will take them aside and show them some beautiful thing, standing, as the tabernacle did in vision and pattern before Moses, and the Great Architect will say, "See here, this is your life." The soul will start back abashed —"It cannot be!" And then it will be made clear that God caught up the results of every obedient act, however trivial, reserving them until He could knit them together in the completed whole which will stand forever.

The one thing which should always ring in our hearts is the precept, "See that thou make all things according to the pattern shown on the Mount." Let us keep looking upward, not only in the great crises of life, but in the small and tiny incidents, that we may be able to say with Jesus: "The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do. Whatsoever He does, this also the Son does likewise."

II. The Lessons of the Tabernacle. They were as follows:—

God's willingness to share man's life. If the people had only seen the devouring fire on the top of Sinai, the pavilion of God's presence, they would never have dared to think that there was any community of interest between Him and them. To their minds, He would always have seemed distant and unapproachable. So God said, "Let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them" (Ex. xxv. 8). And He promised concerning it, "I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God" (Ex. xxix. 45). Did not this larger tent, pitched among them, struck and pitched at the same hour with theirs, and enduring the same vicissitudes of weather and travel, show, as plainly as words could, that the tabernacle of God was with men; that Jehovah had become a pilgrim with the pilgrim host; that He was no longer a God afar off, but a sharer in their life? In a word, did not the tabernacle teach the lesson of the Incarnation?

The greatness of God. The tabernacle was the most superb building of its kind ever reared by man. It must have cost at least a million dollars—an immense sum for a fugitive nation of slaves. The seven-branched candlestick alone weighed one hundred weight of gold. Did not this teach new and enlarged conceptions of the Divine Majesty? Did not the children realize how great God's greatness was?

God's unity. All around, the nations had many temples to many gods. Israel had only one tabernacle, one ark, one altar. The tabernacle stood, therefore, among men, as a perpetual protest against idolatry, and as an emphatic witness to the unity of God. "Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God is one Lord!"

God's spirituality. On the mountain the lawgiver saw the robes of the King, but not the King; His glory, but not His Person; His back, but not His face. This absence of any visible form in the inner shrine astonished the rough soldier Pompey, who expected to find in the Holy of Holies some visible embodiment of Jehovah, and turned contemptuously away when he found nothing; but to the spiritually minded Jew what a revelation the tabernacle must have given that God was a Spirit!

NADAB AND ABIHU.

(August 10, Leviticus x. 1-11.)

The tabernacle had only just been reared, and Aaron with his two sons set apart for their sacred office, when the fatal tragedy narrated in this chapter took place, casting a gloom over the entire camp. Nadab and Abihu, sons of Aaron, instead of taking glowing embers for their censers from the brazen altar, the fire of which had been lighted from heaven, seem to have filled them with coals kindled from some other source, and on these had cast incense and dust. It was a distinct and aggravated violation of the distinct prohibition of Exodus xxx. 8, and could not be tolerated, lest a disastrous laxity should creep into the observance of the whole system, which had just been elaborated and communicated to the charge of the priesthood. It must be established and insisted upon beyond dispute that God must be sanctified in all that came near Him, and glorified before all the people.

I. The Cause of This Neglect. It can hardly have been brought about by the flurried and nervous excitement incident to their entrance on a new office. If such had been the cause, surely they would not have been so summarily dealt with, for in this very chapter, Aaron, under the pressure of heart-rending grief, is recorded as having made a similar mistake. "Moses diligently sought the goat of the sin-offering, and behold it was burnt." On discovering this, he was angry with the two surviving sons of Aaron, that they had contravened one of his most earnestly asserted injunctions. But when Aaron reminded him of all the things which had befallen, and how he had been compelled to strive against his feelings, and to perform his service under the most awful strain to which a man, or men, could be subjected, "his anger was appeased," and nothing more was said. If, therefore, these young men could have pleaded ignorance or timidity, their fault would doubtless have been condoned. "I obtained mercy," says the apostle, "because I did it ignorantly through unbelief." If this action had been due to inadvertance, it is certain that it would not have been punished so terribly.

Another suggestion, however, arises from the prohibition of strong drink in the next paragraph (8-11). The fact of this injunction occurring in such close continuity to the narrative of the sudden cutting off of Aaron's sons, gives rise to the supposition that these young men loved the intoxicating cup, and indulged in it to fortify them for their work, instead of obtaining from God Himself the grace and strength they needed. They were filled with wine, with its riot and excess, instead of being filled with the Spirit. But God cannot be properly served under the influence of alcohol, which has so powerful an effect on our sensual nature. They who serve in holy things must beware of all that appeals to the flesh. No sensuous emotion, no overwrought excitement, no vehemence born of the fiery potency of wine, have any place in the temple of God, who will be sanctified in them that come nigh Him, and must be worshiped in spirit and truth. For after all time, it must be established that our sources of inspiration are not of men but of God, not of wine but of the Divine Spirit.

Those who have not relied on the false inspiration of alcohol may yet have sought stimulus and aid from sources which have the same influence on the mind as it has on the body. We have gone for the quickening of the mind to the novel, the play, or the excitement of the hypnotist or spirit-medium. Too distant in aim and thought from the Divine Spirit, we have turned to some other spirit, the first that obeyed our call, that our thoughts might glow and our emotions be fired. And too often the result has been the kindling of a strange fire. Here has been the semblance of the Divine Flame, the appearance of earnestness, of the intense desire for the glory of God and the good of men, thoughts have flowed in brilliant conception, and words that stir men's blood have sprung to our lips; but there has been no lasting response in the hearts of our hearers. They may have been aroused for a moment, and looked at us with one searching glance, then closed their eyes and relapsed into the lethargy which ends in death.

II. Aaron's Reception of the News. "He held his peace" whilst his nephews drew near, at the command of Moses, wrapt the two lifeless forms in the freshly made robes of office, and bore them from the holy

place to their graves. The Divine bidding was stringent and unalterable, that there was to be no sign of grief in Aaron, or in the brothers of the two dead priests, Eleazer and Ithamar. The hair of their heads was not to go loose, they were not to rend their clothes, no cry of bewailing grief was to pass their lips. They were to remember that the anointing oil of God was upon them, and were to allow the last rites of sepulture to be performed by their brethren, the whole house of Israel.

Altogether it was a most moving and impressive experience. Outside, the camp was thrown into the greatest consternation and alarm, as from lip to lip the tidings sped of what had befallen. Horror on the faces of the men; wailing on the part of the women; awesomeness of the young companions of the dead, as they bore them to their burial.

Why this reticence in the face of death? Are human emotions amiss on holy men? Must we stay our tears when engaged in the Divine service, which other men are allowed to shed? Not wholly so. For you will remember that this was not a mere case of bereavement. It was not merely that Aaron's sons had died, but that they had died through acts of disobedience. The refraining from grief, therefore, on the part of Aaron and their brethren meant their silent acquiescence in a deserved penalty, meant that the reverence of God was much more to them than natural ties of kindred and blood, meant that they took God's side even though it should be against themselves.

The writer of these words can realize how much effort this reticence of grief implied. He remembers when the tidings of his mother's death came to him, brought by the telegraph messenger one Saturday morning as he was standing in the midst of a group of discharged prisoners. At a glance he knew that one of the sweetest, saintliest women God ever made had passed from earth, never more to be his inspiration and guiding star, never more to sympathize in his sorrows and be glad for his success, but he dared not stop to realize his loss; this work must be done, these souls must be set on a brighter track of life. And even then, there could be no leisure to nurse his grief. The next day, being the Lord's day, there would be the great crowds waiting to be ministered to. He dare not tell the secret which he bore in his own heart, lest he should be misunderstood and accounted heartless. But when all was over, and the congregation had dispersed, and the night fell, then it was possible for the heart to express itself, then the flood-gates were opened to admit the tides of grief, which all day and night had been throbbing for admittance, and so to the grave where she lies within hearing of the beat of the ocean-wave.

Across us there float old words which seem a little stern sometimes, about losing father or mother. He who wept at the grave of his friend, and was sensitive to all the sorrow that surged around him, cannot be insensible to the affections, which as our Creator, He originally implanted in the hearts of men; but when the human and divine meet, when the tides of feeling threaten to rend us from our moorings and bear us back on the wild sea, we must elect that God's service and glory should have the supreme place, dry our tears, and do His will. Are we chosen to draw near unto God? Is it His will that we should minister to Him in the priest's office? Then let us see to it that we draw near to Him with reverence and godly fear, remembering that holiness becomes His house forever, and that His word, His glory, His service must be more to us than our fairest dreams of earthly bliss.

JOURNEYING TOWARDS CANAAN.

(August 17, Numbers x. 11-13; 29-36.)

Israel remained in the neighborhood of Sinai for about a year. They saw the round of the seasons; but the green verdure of the spring and the fading tints of the autumn would leave no trace on the appearance of those vast sandstone rocks. But how great a change had been wrought in their condition! They had come as a rabble of slaves; they went forth as a mighty nation, in battle array, furnished with a code of laws and sanitary enactments which have been a model for the most civilized peoples of the world, and provided with a sacerdotal system which was to endure for centuries.

The appearance of the camp indicated this marvelous change. In the midst stood

the sacred tent with its brooding cloud, and around it the goodly tents of the people, "as gardens by the riverside, as lign aloes which the Lord had planted, or as cedars beside the waters." The priests and Levites pitched immediately around it, in the inner circle; and around them again the twelve great tribes, three towards each point of the compass, guarding the tabernacle as a most sacred charge, and as the center of their national life.

I. The Order of March. The signal for striking the tents was the blast of an alarm on the silver trumpets. Then the camps on the east side started; first the children of Judah, second the children of Issachar, and third the children of Zebulon. After these the sons of Gershom and the sons of Merari, who were charged with the heavier portions of the tabernacle, in their six wagons, fell into the line of march.

A second time an alarm was blown, and the camps on the south side took their journey. First the hosts of Reuben, second the hosts of the children of Simeon, and third the hosts of the children of Gad, and close behind these the Kohathites set forward, carrying on their shoulders the vessels of the Holy Service. Then the remaining six tribes brought up the rear, Ephraim, Manasseh, Benjamin; Dan, Asher, Naphtali.

All was beautifully ordered; and though we may not attribute the mighty revolution which had been thus effected to the unaided genius of Moses, we cannot but feel that, as God for the most part gave His teachings through minds competent to receive and transmit them, so the mental endowments of Moses must have been of no mean order, that he could so readily take, and keep, and transmit the legislation which made Israel a great people.

It is quite probable that the vast flocks and herds belonging to Israel were scattered over a wide area of country, and their movements were only generally determined by those of the host, but what a vast number of people, men, women and children, were thus dependent from day to day upon the bountiful care of God, who never forgot to spread a table before them in the wilderness, however petulant and full of murmuring they were. Are we not taught the lesson which is repeated in the feeding of the five thousand, that we have to see to the orderly arrangement of God's hosts, and He will be responsible for all that is needed for their maintenance?

II. The Guidance of the March. During their stay at Sinai, it is probable that deputations from neighboring tribes visited the people, and amongst them was the chieftain of a tribe closely related to Moses by marriage. Hobab was the son of Reuel, the Midianite, Moses' father-in-law. Of course, he knew the country well, every foot of it—where the springs lay, and the pastures, and the safest, shortest routes; and so Moses approached him with the request that he would go with them, to give them the benefit of his practical knowledge (v. 31).

Shall we not find in this the instinctive shrinking of the human heart from the strange and unknown way? It was because Moses had never gone that way before that he was so eager to obtain Hobab's company, and offered as a bribe that "what goodness the Lord shall do unto us, the same will we do unto thee." We are all conscious of the same fear. We do not know what may await us at the next turn of the path, or at the summit of the pass; what foes may lurk; what emergencies arise; what unexpected barriers arrest us. How well to have a Hobab who knows the ground! But is there not a great danger that we should put man before God; that we should so cling to Hobab as to become unmindful of the true Guide and Leader of souls?

The desert chieftain was by no means enamoured of the proposal of his relative. He had no desire to leave his tribe, his camping-ground, his free, careless existence, to link his fortunes to that great host. Therefore, he said bluntly, "I will not go; but I will depart unto mine own land, and to my kindred."

But it would seem as if his aid were rendered needless by another arrangement. Up to this moment the position of the cloud had been in the midst of the host, in front of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, but from this moment it went three day's journey in front of the people, "to seek out a resting-place for them" (v. 33). We may conceive of its lonely journey as it went forward, borne by its attendant

band of priests and Levites, and perhaps accompanied by a little group of princes and warriors, and especially by the great lawgiver himself. Far behind, at a distance of miles, the camp followed with its tumult, its murmur of many voices, the cries of little children, the measured tramp of armed bands. But none of these intruded on the silence and solemnity of that majestic procession which passed forward, the courier group below, unseen cherubic forms above. When the ark set forward, the voice of the great lawgiver was heard saying, "Rise up, O Lord, and let Thine enemies be scattered, and let them that hate Thee flee before Thee";—words which are the keynote of one of the greatest Psalms (Psalm lxviii. 1, 2). And when it was deposited within the Most Holy Place, which had been reared ready for its reception, again the voice of Moses was heard saying, "Return, O Lord, unto the ten thousands of the thousands of Israel."

We have all to pass into the untried and unknown, and know not the way we should take, but the Lord Jesus is the true Ark of the Covenant, Who has gone before us through the world and death. We have but to follow Him. It is for Him to scatter our enemies, while we stand still and see His salvation. It is for Him to choose our resting-place, while we lie down and prepare ourselves for new obedience. He will be to us instead of eyes;—only we gladly recognize that He is not three days' journey distant, but near, and always with us, even to the end. In Him we go out; in Him we come back; in work and rest, He is All.

THE REPORT OF THE SPIES.

(August 24, Numbers xiii. 1-3; xiii. 25-xiv. 9.)

We ought to view this commandment to search out the land, in the light of Deut. i. 19-22, from which it appears that the first proposal to send spies before the host of Israel did not emanate from Jehovah, but from the people themselves. "Ye came near unto me, every one of you, and said, We will send men before us."

Surely this was a proof of their incipient unbelief. Was it not enough to know from the lips of their leader, that the Lord was bringing them into a good land, a land of brooks and water, of fountains and depths that sprang out of valleys and hills, a land of wheat and barley, and vines, and pomegranates, a land of oil, olive and honey, wherein they were to eat bread without scarceness, and not lack anything in it? Was not the whole land God's gift to His beloved people? Was it not enough for Him to be aware of all the difficulties, incident to its invasion and capture? It was surely a mistake, if not worse, to spy it out. It is quite true that here the command to send the spies appears to emanate from God; but there is more than one instance in Scripture of God giving men that on which their minds were determinately set; that through the consequences which accrued, they should learn what an evil thing it was to take the reins out of His hand.

I. The Report of the Spies. Up to a certain point there was perfect unanimity. The land was all that Moses had said. It was a delightsome land, which seemed to lie ever under the smile of God. It "flowed with milk," that is, it was rich in pasture lands, over which herds of cattle might browse. It "flowed with honey," that is, it abounded in flowers, which carpeted it with beauty. Its terraced hills were marvelously suited for the cultivation of the vine, and the grapes of Eshcol were proverbial for their luscious sweetness.

Then came divergence. On the one hand ten of the spies magnified the difficulties that threatened any attempt to possess themselves of the country. They spelt giants with a capital G, and God with a small g. They allowed their minds to dwell on the strength of the people, the great and fenced cities, and the towering stature of the Arabian. There was not thought of the living God, no searching out of what He meant, when He said that He intended to *give* the land to them; no estimate of the resources of power and love, which were awaiting the appeal of their faith.

The other two, Caleb and Joshua, did not minimize the difficulties. They were quite willing to admit the strength of the walls, the might of the guards, and the terror of the iron chariots. But in addition they beheld the mighty God. He was greater than all that were against them. "Fear not ye the people of the land," they

cried with the courage of faith, "they are bread unto us: their defence is removed from over them, and the Lord is with us; fear them not."

There are two classes of people in the world. The one puts circumstances between themselves and God; and it is as though a man should look at the sun through a dense mist; others, happier far, put God between themselves and everything, and their difficulties seem as far distant as the landscape when viewed through a reversed telescope. This makes all the difference in life. The man of faith has a third keyboard to his organ, and plays his fingers on a set of laws which are out of the reach of a man of the world. For him the world is full of horses and chariots of fire that encamp around him; angels minister to him; the stars in their courses fight on his side, the Lord of Hosts is with him, and all those hosts in their harnessed sway are pledged to his succor.

II. The Effect on the Congregation. They wept. "And all the congregation lifted up their voice and cried; and the people wept that night." They felt themselves to be as the grasshoppers. The dark clouds of unbelief gathered thickly around them, and veiled from them the presence and help of God. In the song which they had chanted so jubilantly on the shores of the Red Sea, they had vaunted themselves thus: "The people shall hear and be afraid, sorrow shall take hold on the inhabitants of Palestine." But instead of this *they* were afraid and sorrow had taken hold on *them*. "Then," the song had proceeded, "the dukes of Edom shall be amazed; the mighty men of Moab, trembling shall take hold of them; all the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away. Fear and dread shall fall upon them." But all this was reversed. Israel was amazed; trembling had taken hold of the mighty men: fear and dread had fallen upon them. They had forgotten their old assurance. "By the greatness of thine arm, they shall be as still as a stone, till thy people pass over, O Lord, till the people pass over which thou hast purchased. Thou shalt bring them in and plant them in the mountain of Thine inheritance, in the place, O Lord, which Thou hast made for them to dwell in."

In all this, we may see ourselves. We, too, have our hours of high elation and congratulation. All our difficulties seem as the small dust of the balance, because God so entirely fills the horizons of our life: at other times, when we have allowed disobedience or unbelief to come in, when we have fixed our attention on our difficulties more than on the living God, we, too, have had our fainting fits, and have wept our bitter tears of despair.

They Murmured. "All the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron; and the whole congregation said unto them, Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness! wherefore doth the Lord bring us into this land, to fall by the sword? . . . . Let us make a captain, and let us return unto Egypt!"

This was probably the bitterest hour, so far, in Moses' life. They had purposed to do the same thing once before, but at that time he was absent from the camp. Here was an affront to his face. The people whom he had loved with a passionate devotion, for whose sake he had sacrificed everything that Egypt had to offer, whose very existence was due to his intercessions, actually proposed to depose him from his position on the very borders of the land of Promise, within sight of the goal of all their hopes. It was as nothing to them apparently, that for the last fifteen months they had traveled some four hundred miles in their journey, needing nothing, supplied with manna for their food, and water for their thirst—all his patient work was to be swept away before their petulant outburst.

Have we not all passed through a similar experience? We have had our long and tiresome march, but we have not allowed ourselves to be too greatly downcast by it. We have comforted our hearts with the thought that we are laying others under obligations which they would never forget or ignore: we have reached out our hands to take the ripe clustered fruits of rest, reward, and refreshment. Then all suddenly the fair project has dissolved like a palace in the clouds of the western horizon, or like that fair transcript of the surrounding hills which is mirrored in the bosom of a mountain lake, till broken up by rains. We are linked with people who have no sympathy with our visions, no

confidence in our promises, who refuse to see things as we see them; and for their sakes, we hear the voice which bids us all turn, and get back into that great and terrible wilderness, which lies behind us. In such a moment as that, there is simply no other resource than to throw ourselves on the ground before God, and tell Him the full burden of our sorrow, meekly accepting the discipline, and kissing the rod. Whatever His commandments, however stern His discipline—*He* is love. "We see that they could not enter in because of unbelief."

III. Joshua and Caleb. They were blessed men. The one lived to take up the work of Moses, and settle the people in the land; the other bore fruit to old age, and boasted, in the evening of his years, that he was as strong to go in and out as when he had followed Moses forth in the Exodus. It is recorded of Caleb specially that "he wholly followed the Lord his God." Is not that the root of all faith, all heroic strength, all peace and joy? When a man is divided in his allegiance, looking this way or that, shifting his sails to catch every breath of popular applause, his course is weak and uncertain; he loses sight of God, and drifts aimlessly and in vain. But those who consecrate themselves to follow and obey the one gentle Master, pledging themselves by His face to be absolutely, only, and always for Him, perpetually change their strength from less to more, make their boast in God, and dare to stand alone in their quiet faith though it be in the face of a nation in arms.

THE BRAZEN SERPENT.

(August 31, Numbers xxi. 1-9.)

"Much discouraged because of the way!" It is a phrase which exactly describes the experience of many a pilgrim over the matter of time. There were many causes that produced their despondency in the case of Israel. They were disappointed on finding themselves so near the confines of the promised land but unable to enter it. They were vexed at the refusal of a passage through the territory of Edom, which enforced a long and circuitous journey through the worst paths of a sandy desert. They were fearful of being plunged into new and unknown difficulties. Thus they were betaken of great depression of spirits, which was presently followed by a gross outburst of murmuring at the scarcity of water, and the monotony of the manna.

Then God sent fiery serpents. The part of the desert—at the head of the Gulf of Ahaba—is even now greatly infested with venomous reptiles of all kinds, which lie among the long grass, and are specially dangerous to the barelegged sandalled people of the East. Why the epithet "fiery" was applied to the special serpents mentioned here, does not appear. It may refer to their bright, vivid color, or to the violent inflammation which their bite occasioned. Some think that they were a specie of flying serpent, which is now extinct.

The severity of the scourge, and the many deaths, brought the people to realize the greatness of their sins, and immediately on their repentance there was a gracious interference on their behalf. The Lord bade His servant make the figure of a serpent in brass, to be lifted high on a pole, so that it might be seen to the furthest extremities of the camp, that any bitten Israelite might look and live.

I. The Lifting Up. "Even so must the Son of Man be lifted up" (John iii. 14). The singularity of the remedy consisted in its resemblance to the disease. Serpents were destroying them, and they were saved by the likeness of a serpent. But this likeness was *not* of a serpent in its springing might, with its forked tongue, and its agile movement; but of a serpent with a drooping head, and motionless fangs, and helpless impotence. It was an emblem of defeat, of weakness, of inability to harm. The effigy on the pole represented the creature which was destroying them as a spent force, of which there was no need to be afraid.

In the same way, when Jesus was nailed to the cross, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, this was condemned in Him. To use the strong words of the Apostle Paul, "Our old man was crucified with him that the body of sin might be destroyed, and that henceforth we should serve him." "Christ being lifted up, then, meant this, whatever else, that in His death sin was slain, and its power to hurt ended." As He was made sin for us, we are to argue that what was done to Him was done to sin. In Him sin came to an end, so far as the purpose of God was concerned. Stinging

Him, it stung itself to death. The empire of sin came to an end at Calvary, although some interval may elapse before the results are fully accomplished and all "the commandos" lay down their arms. Let us reckon, then, that for Christ and for those who enter by faith with the significance of His death, and account themselves one with Him, there is no longer need to cower under the dread power of sin. He that abideth in Him sinneth not, He that sinneth hath not seen Him nor known Him.

As the serpent was "lifted up, so as to be seen in every part of the camp," even so the death of our Saviour has proven His commanding influence over the hearts of men. The cross became His throne, from whence to rule the world. "Thou art worthy, for thou wast slain." Had it not been for His death, our Lord could not have been the Saviour, though He might have been the patron of men. It was necessary for Him to die, that He might put away sin, and bring in eternal righteousness.

I love that word *must*—"must be lifted up." If there had been another way, it would have been selected; but there was none. In no other way could the love of God have free course and be glorified. In no other way could transgression be made an end of. In no other way could God be just, and the justifier of those who have faith in Jesus. *Must*—God Himself had considered all other possible alternatives, and this was the one solution of the enormous difficulties that had to be met and removed. *Must*—the very nature of things preëmptorily demanded it. *Must*—only in this way could He become Saviour, Priest, King, Brother, and life-giver of men. Oh, sad, yet blessed necessity! Sad, because it cost Him so much: *blessed,* because it has brought us so much.

II. The Look. The wounded Israelites had simply to look and live—to look not at himself—not at others around him, but at the pole with its burden. To refuse that was to incur certain death. It was useless to look anywhere else. But there was certain health in one look to the serpent of brass, flashing in the burning sunbeams. "*Everyone* that is bitten, *when* he looketh upon it shall live."

Notice that there was a moral act upon the part of each healed one. Of course, it would have been quite easy for God to have healed the people, without the intervention of a look; but the look meant much in the inner life of the one who looked. It meant that they gave up their own remedies, their own way, their own will, and submitted themselves in absolute faith to the will of another. It meant that they believed God's word, and expected that it would be fulfilled. It meant that the pride which had led them to resist God, and fill their mouths with murmurings, was broken down, and that they were willing to accept God's help, just as He deigned to send it. By a beautiful simplicity, the bitten, dying man received the fullness of blessing.

It was in this way that we received eternal life. We must not look to ordinances, to churches, to men, or angels—there is no help in any of these—but exclusively to Jesus, Who is our hope. Not to a doctrine, but to Him of Whom the doctrine speaks; not to a fact, but to Him of Whom the fact is true; not to the death of Christ, but to Him Who died and rose again, and ever liveth to make intercession. We may adopt the thought of another and say, that "it is a little and easy thing in itself, but it indicates a great and difficult change of mind." It is so slight and easy that the dying can do it. The feeblest and most ignorant can turn in thought to the Lord Jesus, and can with the dying thief say, "Lord, remember me," but before a man will do this he must be convinced that his own righteousnesses are as filthy rags, and there is no way of salvation save through the work of the Son of God, and that henceforth all hope of peace, and joy, and strength must be centered in the throne "upon which stands the Lamb, Who has been slain."

We can imagine that bitten and healed Israelites would not only look for themselves, but be very eager to induce their companions and relatives to do the same. Here is a father whose shin has been punctured by the slender weapon of the serpent fang. How slight the external mark on his flesh, but within, the blood is becoming fevered, the sight is dimming, the heart throbbing, the frame convulsed, the rigid muscles no longer answering to his will! They tell us that there is one poison, which causes men to leap and dance, while

another distorts the face of the dying with a hideous manifestation of laughter—either of these symptoms is apparent in this dying man. But his children hasten him from the tent, carry him, if need be to a spot, whence he may behold the brazen serpent. Instantly there is an arrest put on the fatal malady, and life begins to course through his veins.

III. Life. When he beheld the serpent of brass he lives: "Whosoever believeth in him hath eternal life." The great word *eternal* means something more than everlasting,—the duration of a never-ending existence. To have that alone were to gain nothing by our second birth. Nay, it would repeat the mistake of the old Greek myth, in which the goddess obtained for her lover immortal life, but forgot to claim also immortal youth, so that his years became an unsupportable anguish. "Eternal" refers rather to the quality than the quantity of life, and tells us that it is altogether removed from the conditions of space and time, and partakes of the blessed, timeless, glorious, spiritual nature of God.

This is in the Christ for us. The cross breaks forever the power and dominion of sin. It causes a clean cleavage between us and the torture of the serpent-bite, and admits us into living union with the Risen, Glorious Lord. In that He died, He died unto sin; in that He liveth, He liveth unto God; and we reckon ourselves also to be dead unto sin, and alive unto God through Him.

THE HEART OF THE LESSON.

Rev. C. I. Scofield, D. D.

(International Sunday-School Lessons for July, 1902.)

THE TABERNACLE.

(August 3, Exodus xl. 1-38)

The expression "tabernacle of the congregation" does not correctly render the original. Literally it is "tent of meeting," because it was the divinely appointed place where God would meet the priestly representative of his people. It was in no sense a "meeting house" for the gathering of the congregation of Israel. The multitude encamped about the tabernacle, but could not enter, even its outer court, except representatively by the priests. Into the holy of holies not even the priests could enter, but only the high priest once every year, on the Day of Atonement.

Every Christian should become perfectly familiar with the construction and typology of the tabernacle, for it constitutes a divinely given object lesson in the way of approach to God, and in the person and work of Jesus Christ. So absolutely is this true that it is not too much to say that no one can profoundly understand Christ and His work who remains ignorant of the typical significance of the tabernacle and priesthood. But the heart of this lesson is anointing unto service. Eight times does the word occur. The tabernacle, and all that was in it, and every vessel belonging to the elaborate tabernacle service; the altar and all objects connected with the altar service; the laver, Aaron and his sons —all must be anointed, and the effect of the anointing was that the anointed objects and persons were "hallowed," or made "holy" and fit for the service of the Lord.

The immense typical significance of all this is evident to the most superficial student of the New Testament who remembers that the holy anointing oil was a type of the Holy Spirit. As in the tabernacle neither priest nor vessel could enter the divine service until anointed, so it is in respect of the service of Christ. Our Lord Himself must be anointed before beginning His ministry, and the apostles were commanded to tarry till they were endued with power from on high. On the day of Pentecost they were both baptized (Acts ii. 3), and filled (Acts ii. 4) with the Holy Spirit, and began a service of marvelous power and blessing. The baptism remained, but the filling required renewal (Acts iv. 31). So it is with all believers. The anointing abides (1 John ii. 27), but we are not truly fitted to perform the smallest

service for Christ unless we are also filled with the Spirit. In the apostolic church even the office of "serving tables" demanded men "filled with the Holy Spirit" (Acts vi. 3). Obviously, since all were baptized with the Spirit, a distinction was already observed between disciples who were, and who were not, filled with the Spirit.

NADAB AND ABIHU.

(August 10, Leviticus x. 1-11.)

Three notable instances of divine judgment upon individuals stand out in the Scriptures—the judgment upon Nadab and Abihu for offering strange fire, the judgment upon Uzzah for irreverence, and the judgment upon Ananias and Sapphira for lying to God. Each of these signal acts of judgment are impressive lessons which teach, concerning each of the sins thus punished, a twofold lesson, namely, the especial abhorrence in which God holds those sins, and the spiritual peril involved in them. To-day we are concerned with the sin of Nadab and Abihu. What was it then to offer "strange fire," and what, in modern times, answers to that sin?

The "strange" fire offered by Nadab and Abihu was fire which had not fed upon sacrifice. The Divine command was that incense, which typifies prayer and worship, must be consumed by a live coal from the brazen altar of burnt offering. It seemed a small thing, doubtless, to these presumptuous priests. What could it matter to Jehovah, they might have said, whether the incense is consumed by one coal or another? The principal matter is to get it consumed, since that is part of the ceremonial. Nadab and Abihu were of that school of exegetes which never had so many pupils as now, who say, "We must avoid a narrow literalism." The headmaster of this school is Satan, whose exegesis of the command, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," was, "Ye shall not surely *die*"—ye are too literal in your interpretation.

And the modern offering of strange fire is the producing of a "religious" feeling by expedients which appeal to the fleshly emotions—grandeur in church building, a "dim religious light" falling through the windows stained with "holy" emblems and effigies, processionals and recessionals, the performance of solemn and exquisite music by professionals, and such like methods. Anything, in short, which substitutes for a holy fire in the heart, wrought there by the Spirit of God in contemplation of the cross, a simulated fervor, or a fleshly religiosity—this is the modern form of the sin of Nadab and Abihu as practiced by masses of people.

Doubtless a subtler form of the sin is its personal form when we, as individuals, go on with a "form of godliness" in prayer and praise, keeping up the use of the words which once were all a quiver with holy light and life, long after our hearts have grown cold and back-slidden. And, while the penalty of destruction by the flame of the Divine wrath is not visited upon us, there is a consequence of utter spiritual deadness which we incur.

Ten thousand times rather remain silent than sing "If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus, 't is now," unless that is literally true when you sing it.

JOURNEYING TOWARDS CANAAN.

(August 17, Numbers x. 11-13, 29-36.)

It must be borne in mind that Canaan is not a type of heaven, but of the earthly rest of the people of God. There was death in Canaan, but there is no death in heaven (Joshua xxiv. 29; Rev. xxi. 4). There was conflict in Canaan, but there is no conflict in heaven (Joshua viii. 1-3; Rev. xxii. 7). The book of Joshua in the Old Testament and of Ephesians in the New, are complementary. There are four possible places where the believer may be: in Egypt, or the world; in the wilderness, or the unconsecrated, unspiritual life; in Canaan, or the life of victory over self and sin through the Spirit; or in heaven itself. The present object of the believer is neither to be "saved at last," for he is saved already; nor to get to heaven, for that is sure; but to be "delivered from this present evil world," and to be victorious over self and over "wicked spirits in heavenly places" (Gal. i. 4; Eph. vi. 10-18; Rom. viii. 2; Gal. v. 16). This is the "rest" of Hebrews iii. 17, iv. 11.

But the lesson would more properly be called a lesson on divine guidance. The fact that the destination of Israel was Canaan is, after all, but incidental. Here was a nation whose center was the taber-

nacle, and whose journey was, day by day, supernaturally regulated. No Israelite could say, when the cloud rested how long the stay would be, nor when it moved what the destination would be. Over all this they had no responsibility. All was in and from the wisdom and will of God. No less than this measure of guidance is both the obligation and privilege of the believer.

God has a plan for every life-journey of every one of His children, and that plan is meant to secure the child's greatest possible measure of happiness and of usefulness. It is what David calls the "path," or "way" of the Lord. Take the Psalms and, with a concordance, seek out the passages where those words are used. The *method* of such guidance is yieldedness and prayer. When we really desire to *do* the will of God we shall know it if we also ask. "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to every man liberally." But we shall never know the will of God for our path unless we are willing to *do* it. If there is a reservation at one point we shall ask in vain.

But the heart of this lesson lies in a peril to which every believer's path is subject—the peril of forsaking the guidance of God for the counsel of man—the cloud for Hobab. For the moment Moses was in this snare. "Thou shalt be to us instead of eyes." What a saying from a man before whose eyes God's guiding pillar of cloud was standing! The wise men who came seeking the Infant did very well so long as they followed the star, but when they came to great Jerusalem they forsook the star to ask counsel of Herod and the Scribes. They found the King indeed, but at the cost of the slaughter of the innocents.

REPORT OF THE SPIES.

(August 24, Numbers xiii. 1–xiv. 4.)

This is one of the great pivotal chapters in the history of Israel. Led by the infallible cloud to Kadesh-barnea on the border of the promised land, and commanded to go in and possess it, they refused to go, through the fear of unbelief. Afterward, under a new impulse, but equally without faith, they desired to enter the land but, for that generation, the day of opportunity had passed. They turned back into the wilderness, and became a forty years' grief to God. "With whom was he grieved forty years? Was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness?" (Heb. iii. 17.)

The "sin" was that these ancient people of God were not in the *place* appointed for them, and where their blessings awaited them. In Canaan God had appointed for His people possession, rest, victory, and fulfilled promise (Joshua xxi. 43-45). In the wilderness they led a life characterized by the precise opposite. Instead of possession they had but the weary path of their journeying and the stony ground of their encampment. Instead of rest, they "wandered." Even their victories secured them but a passage way, and they were not on ground where faith could plead a single promise.

The analogue of all this is found for the Christian of to-day in the contrast between the experiences of the seventh and eighth chapters of Romans. The former is the experience of a Christian in whom rages the conflict between his new and spiritual nature received in regeneration, and his old "flesh," the natural man. To *will* is present with him, because the new man yearns to do the will of God, but how to *perform* that which is good he finds not. Moreover, the law is a continual torment to him, for, being born again, he is able to "delight in the law of God after the inner man." Striving to form a character under law he but finds "another law" in his members, warring against the law of his mind and bringing him into captivity to the law of sin which is in his members.

It is the average Christian experience, marked by all the signs which Paul, in Corinthians, calls "carnal"—following human leaders, contentious over trifles, and apathetic concerning the real evils which afflict the church.

But the eighth of Romans is an experience pitched in another key. Where all was wretchedness and defeat in the seventh, all is triumph and exultation in the eighth. What makes the difference? One fact and but one. The man of the seventh of Romans is a Christian, regenerated, justified, saved, and possessing, also, the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. vi. 19). The man of the eighth of Romans is the same man, Paul

the Apostle, *filled* with the Spirit. The believer *is* "blessed with all spiritual blessings," but observe *where*, "in the heavenly, in Christ Jesus." The "heavenly" (not "heavenly *places*," which entirely destroys the sense) is the sphere of the believer's present association with Christ in: (1) *position* (Eph. ii. 6); (2) *service* (2 Cor. vi. 1); (3) *suffering* (Col. i. 24); and (4) *world-rejection* (John xv. 18-20). When the believer is maintaining in experience his association with Christ in those four particulars he is "in the heavenly in Christ Jesus" where all his blessings are. But this can be maintained only through the Holy Spirit in His fullness (Rom. viii. 2; Eph. v. 18-21).

THE BRAZEN SERPENT.

(August 31, Numbers xxi. 1-9.)

There can be no hesitation in applying this lesson in type to the Lord Jesus, for such is His own application of it in John iii. 14, 15. But when this is said we are face to face with the deepest mystery of the atonement. It is not merely the heart of this lesson which we are to find—that lies in the analogy between the uplifted serpent of brass and the uplifted Son of man—but we are to try to understand *why* that analogy exists. We shall, at the best, be able to go but a little way into this mystery, for a horror of great darkness lies over this region. Against attempting to solve metaphysically the deeper mysteries of the cross God significantly warned man when He covered the agonies of expiation with "a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour" (Luke xxiii. 44); and when the darkness lifted the mystery was finished—Christ was dead.

But while evil and only evil has resulted from metaphysical "theories of the atonement," we may wisely follow just so far as Scripture speaks. "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong to us" (Deut. xxix. 29).

This much, then, may be said, There was in Eden a subtle and beautiful creature concerning which we must, when we utter the word serpent, dismiss from our minds all thought of a writhing snake. *That* is what it is under the curse of God. That creature became Satan's tool in the temptation of Eve, as she became Satan's tool in the temptation of Adam. From that moment the Divine fiat associated forever Satan, the serpent, and sin. Every actual serpent is a hieroglyph of sin, an awful illustration of its power to degrade and to curse, and a reminder of Satan (Gen. iii. 14, 15; Num. xxi. 6-8; Rev. xii. 9). The sin of Israel was punished by an invasion of serpents—a method of retribution which was, perhaps, designed to remind them of all that, from Eden on, had been the language of that symbol, but a method certainly designed to create a new type of Christ crucified.

But all this, though it prepares us to see that Christ "lifted up," after the analogy of the serpent of brass, is in some profound sense associated with sin and the holy wrath of God against sin, does not explain that association. Not until the final, terrible word of the Spirit by Paul in 2 Cor. v. 21, do we come to that mystery beyond whose frontiers no finite mind may go. "For he hath *made him to be sin* for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." This is the midnight horror of the atoning work of Christ. That we might be made "the righteousness of God" (immeasurable height!) it was somehow necessary that He, the sinless and holy one, should be, in those awful hours, in some inscrutable sense "made sin"—associated with the whole serpent symbolism, with the curse, with Satan's foulness, with man's shame, defilement and ruin—immeasurable depth!

GOLDEN TEXT HOMILIES.

Rev. R. A. Torrey.

August 3. *"Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise." Psalms c. 4.*

There is but one way for an unpardoned sinner to approach God; that is on the ground of the atoning blood, with this prayer, "God, be merciful to me a sinner." But after we have received pardon for our

sins there is another way to approach God; that is on the ground of the same atoning blood, but with thanksgiving and praise. We should enter often into Jehovah's gates and courts not only with prayer, but also with thanksgiving and praise. Thanksgiving and praise are sacrifices which are most pleasing to God (Heb. xiii. 15, 16). There is altogether too little thanksgiving and praise in the religious life of most of us. That is one reason why so many of us have so little joy in our religious experience, and so little faith, and so little power in prayer. Nothing promotes true joy more than thanksgiving and praise. Nothing has greater power to increase our faith than remembering what God has done for us and thanking Him for it, and dwelling upon the infinite perfections of His character and being, and praising Him because of them. Nothing does more to rob prayer of power than to forget to return thanks for blessings already received. The whole Bible rings with thanksgiving and praise from cover to cover, and a real Christian life rings with thanksgiving and praise from start to finish.

August 10. *"Let us watch and be sober." 1 Thess. v. 6.*

While the Christian sleeps Satan sows his seed. Eternal vigilance is always the price of safety, and will continue to be until the Lord comes and Satan is bound. The time never comes when the believer can afford to give up watching. The day he does he will be trapped. In order that he may watch well he needs to have the use of all his faculties. Anything that tends to stupefy or dim his perceptions incapacitates him for watching. Any use of wine, or other intoxicants, does beyond a question dim the moral and spiritual perceptions. Indeed such use dims the natural vision and the mental judgment. The best railways forbid all use of wine to their engineers while on duty, and to all other employees, where clearness of sight and judgment are necessary. But a Christian needs clearness of vision every hour of the day and night. There are two weighty reasons given in the context why we should always watch and be sober. The first is that we are children of the day, and drowsiness and drunkenness belong to the night. The second is that the Lord is coming; and, if that day is not to overtake us as a thief, we must watch and be sober. It will be a dreadful thing to have that day overtake you as a thief. So wake up and put away all use of everything that intoxicates. Remember that there are many things besides alcoholic liquors that intoxicate. The theatre, the dance, the card party, sensational novels, all these intoxicate most people that have anything to do with them. And there are many other intoxicating things besides these. Study up what they are, and when you find anything that intoxicates, give it up at once.

August 17. *"For thy name's sake lead me, and guide me." Psalms xxxi. 3.*

Prayers for guidance abound in the Psalms and throughout the Bible. They also abound in the experience of every wise Christian. There is nothing that we more sorely need than guidance from the One who never errs. And there is nothing that we can more readily obtain. Promises of guidance abound in the Old Testament and in the New Testament. Take your concordance and look up the passages that have the words "lead," "guide," "teach," and their derivatives in them. There are three ways in which we obtain guidance: First, by prayer (James v. 1-7); second, by the study of the Word of God (Psalms cxix., cv., cxxx.); third, by the illumination of the Holy Spirit (John xiv. 26, xvi. 13, 14; 1 John ii. 20, 27). To obtain God's guidance in prayer, or in the study of the Word, or by the Holy Spirit, we must be entirely surrendered to His will (John vii. 17, R. V.), emptied of self-confidence (James i. 5; 1 Cor. iii. 18), trustful and expectant (James i. 6, 7). It is not because of any desert of our own that God guides us, but "for his name's sake." I am glad that this is so; for if I could only obtain guidance when I deserved it, I would never get it. But since it is "for thy name's sake," I can have it every day and every hour. It is the believer's privilege to have the unerring wisdom of God to guide him at every turn of life.

August 24. *"Blessed is that man that maketh the Lord his trust." Psalms xl. 4.*

The greatest secret of blessedness is a

very simple secret. It is this, make the Lord your trust. If you make the Lord your trust you will never have an anxious hour (John xiv. 1; Isaiah xxvi. 3). When faith comes in all fear goes out. If you trust in the Lord you will never be confounded or put to shame. If you trust in the Lord, you will never be defeated. You may seem to be but you never really will be. If you trust in the Lord, you will get the victory every day over the world, the flesh, and the devil. If you trust in the Lord, you will have a heaven here below while you are hastening on to the eternal heaven up above. There is nothing else that pays so well as trust in the Lord. And there is nothing else that pays so poorly as to distrust Him. Every sin traced to its ultimate source will be found to originate in distrust of the Lord. Eve got to distrusting the Lord, and she brought ruin on the whole race. Don't distrust God whatever happens. You will be a fool if you do. There is nothing more rational than trust in the Lord. There is nothing more irrational than distrust of the Lord. Just think of distrusting infinite power, infinite wisdom, infinite goodness, infinite love. Suppose you cannot understand some things in God's dealing with you in His providence, or some things written in His Word. Do you suppose that infinitesimal littleness can take in the whole of infinite greatness at one bite? Or in one day, or one week, or one year, or one lifetime? Do you want to know what to do when you cannot understand? Just trust; "blessed is that man that maketh the Lord his trust." Who is your trust? What is your trust?

August 31. *"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." John iii. 14, 15.*

The lifting up of Christ on the cross was a necessity. He "must" be lifted up. There was no other possible way of salvation for man. When Moses lifted up the brazen serpent in the wilderness, made in the likeness of that which was destroying Israel, the people were dying on every hand, the poison was coursing through their veins. And when God permitted His Son to be lifted up on the cross sinners were dying on every hand, the poison of sin that works death eternal was coursing through their veins. But one look at the serpent on the pole instantly saved the one who looked, and life took the place of death. One real look at Jesus on the cross instantly saves the one who looks, eternal life enters the spirit. The bitten Israelite cried, "I am bitten, what shall I do?" And Moses cried back, "Look and live." Is some sinner crying, "I am bitten by this awful serpent of sin, what shall I do"? God cries back, "Look and live." There is eternal life for anyone in a look at Jesus on the cross. There is eternal life for no one in any other way.

Young People's Department.

All communications referring to this department should be sent to the editor, Miss Anna W. Pierson, 1127 Dean Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.

Children in Mission Lands.

SIAM. VIII.

How would you like to be a little Siamese baby and have your mother rub you all over with yellow paste every day, and then put you in a queer little cradle and cover you up head and all? You say you're sure you wouldn't like it, and you're sure you'd smother? Well, perhaps you would and perhaps you wouldn't. Some of these babies live through it anyhow. They are wrapped up carefully until they are able to walk and then they get their "come uppance" for all they have endured by being allowed to run about without any clothes at all! It must be a relief to the poor things when they are past the "smothering" age. From now until they are eleven or thirteen years old (never an

even number, for those are unlucky) they wear no clothes, though they are often adorned with heavy gold or silver ornaments sometimes set with precious stones. The children of the rich and poor are clothed much alike—namely, not at all. The difference in wealth is shown by the amount and value of their jewelry. Even the royal children—except on great occasions—wear nothing but a great deal of jewelry and a smile.

These little cousins of ours are often exceedingly pretty and are usually much loved by their parents. You little Yankee readers might learn much from them if you could see how respectful, obedient and even reverential they are to their parents and to all those in authority over them. Teachers never need to have any trouble about discipline. The scholars are so obedient and respectful that there is no need for punishment of any kind. This is not because the children are naturally so good, but because they are taught to give their teachers the same reverence that they do their priests.

These little yellow people are very kind and lovable and more generous than any other children in the world. They will share or lend anything which they possess. In school they lend their knives and pencils until they seem like common property. Even the cigarettes which the boys smoke are passed around from mouth to mouth until each boy has had a puff. They have plenty of toys of all kinds, and great fun they have with them, too. The girls have dolls made of wood or cloth, and doll houses sometimes set out-doors, with a little grass plot around them, and a toy temple where the dolls can go to church. They play at real life with their dollies, and have feasts for them sometimes of several courses. They have their weddings and funerals and toy priests to perform the rites. The princesses have beautiful toys, too, but do not have real fun with them, as their slaves do the playing while their royal mistresses look on. I wonder how you girlies would like that?

The houses of the Siamese are very queer. Some of them are built up on poles eight or ten feet high, so that during the rainy season they will be high and dry. These are usually built of bamboo sticks tied together, and a thatched roof. To get up to the house they have to climb a ladder. When all the family are at home and do not wish any visitors, they simply pull the ladder up and are safe from intrusion. Other houses are house-boats or floating-houses, and the children who live in these have most fun. They can row their canoes and swim and dive when not much more than babies. They can go fishing any time without going out of their houses, and can take a bath or go swimming a dozen times a day if they like, and never even have to stop to take off their clothes—because they have none on! These children are fond of watching combats or fights, so instead of amusing themselves with cock-fights, they catch small fish and put them in a tub of water and train them to fight by poking them with pointed sticks. Many times one may see a tub surrounded by a group of interested children watching a fish fight. Like the Chinese and Japanese they are fond of flying kites. They are made in many different shapes and sizes, and men, women and children enjoy this sport.

At school the boys learn reading, writing and arithmetic from books, but girls never have any books, but learn everything by rote. The teacher reads a line and each girl in turn repeats it until she learns hundreds of stories and verses. They also learn how to dance and the proper way to carry themselves. This means that they must hold their left arms so that the elbows point toward the front.

The most important event in a child's life in Siam is that of having his top-knot cut. This is a solemn occasion, as the child then becomes "of age." Girls usually have theirs cut when they are nine or eleven years old, and boys at thirteen or fifteen. After consulting priests and wise men a lucky day and hour is chosen and the relatives and guests are invited. Poor people borrow the necessary articles for this great occasion, but wealthy parents sometimes build a special house for the ceremony, and buy beautiful clothing for the child, which is heavy with gold embroidery and often with jewels. They also have gold and silver scissors with which to cut the locks of hair. After the guests and priests arrive, the poor, frightened child is led in and remains all the time during the first day

with his face bowed upon the floor. For two days there are feasts, and chanting, and processions. On the third day the important ceremony is performed. The child is seated upon a throne and his top-knot is divided into three strands. One of these is cut off by the priest and the other two by aged relatives. Then each priest pours holy water over the head of the child, and each relative in turn does the same until the poor thing is well drenched and truly glad when the ceremony is over and the wet clothes can be taken off. Now he is no longer a child, but of age, and ready to be married. The girl has no choice in the matter of a husband, and usually never speaks to him until after the wedding. If a young man sees a girl he would like to marry he tells his parents. They consult their relatives and if they approve they send word to the girl's relatives. They in turn consult their relatives and if they all agree that it is a good match they consent. The poor little bride has nothing to say on the subject, and all his presents go to her parents instead of to her. After the wedding they go at once to housekeeping in a two-roomed house of their own.

One of the queerest things in Siam is the city of Nang Harm (veiled women). There are nearly ten thousand people in this city and all of them are women and children. There are women soldiers, and jewelers, and "butchers, and bakers, and candle-stick makers." No man is ever allowed to enter except the king, and a solemn procession of priests who pass through the streets every morning to receive gifts from the women. The king is admitted because this is his city and his wives and children live here. He can have as many wives as he wishes, and they are the most beautiful women in his kingdom. They consider it a great honor to be one in a hundred of his wives! In this city of women there are shops and markets, theaters and temples. There are parks and gardens and lakes, too. The police and judges and court are all women. It reminds one of Tennyson's story of the Princess Ida and her city of women.

The missionaries are doing good work in Siam, so that many of the people are turning from their idols to serve the living and true God.

TYPES OF THE LAOS PEOPLE.

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MISSIONARY OPPORTUNITIES IN THE NORTHLAND.

A. P. Fitt.

Lying along the northern border of the United States, is a large population of men, women and children, for whom practically nothing is being done in a spiritual way.

A recent visit to northern Wisconsin gave the writer the chance to study the needs on the ground, and awakened a personal interest, such perhaps as is never born except out of personal experience.

THE FIELD.

The field is large, including not only the lumber camps, but also lumber and mining towns, Indian reservations, settlers, tanneries, and railroads. The population is made up of all nationalities, the foreigners being more especially Italians, Swedes, Finns, and Cornishmen from England. The religious character of the people is mixed. Wherever there happens to be a church, some Christians are in evidence. Away from these, professing Christians usually hide their lights. Everywhere the saloon and brothel are conspicuous and aggressive.

Lumber camps. A lumber inspector told the writer that there were two hundred thousand men, at conservative estimate, in the lumber camps of northern Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota, not including the eastern and Pacific coast states and the South, which would add largely to the total. The men stay in camp all the year round, cutting and hauling the logs in winter, and peeling the bark in summer. Railroad logging has also made summer work possible, and in many camps where there are at present only forty to eighty men there will be one hundred and forty in summer.

Lumber towns. The camps lie in bunches around towns which sometimes exist only while these camps are in operation. These towns are dotted all over the map, at intervals of twelve or twenty miles on the railroad. Their population varies from a few hundred to several thousand.

Mining towns. The mining towns are of quite a different character, springing up, as they do, around the shafts of mines. That north country is one mass of ore, and its development has hardly been entered upon as yet.

Indians. There are thousands of Indians in the reservations, many of them still in heathen darkness, worshiping the Great Spirit in ghost dances and carrying on similar practices of savagery.

ITS NEED.

How can words describe the manifold needs of this field? It is almost incredible that within the borders of the United States and on the very skirts of civilization, such abominations should run riot without any Christian effort to check and offset them.

While in camp, the "lumberjacks" (as they call themselves) live a quiet, sober life. No liquor, gambling, or women are allowed. The men rise before daybreak, work hard and retire early. There is little to lead astray here, although there is little or nothing positive done for them in a religious way.

But when pay-day, holiday comes, hell is let loose. The men go into the towns. One of these I visited, of one thousand six hundred population, had two or three small churches, and thirty-two saloons (there used to be thirty-four) all but two having brothels connected. "Barkers" are on the street corners to drag the lumberjacks into the saloons; and before they go away they have squandered or been robbed of every cent of their wages. There is one brothel in northern Wisconsin where over one hundred girls are kept for purposes of prostitution, and its proprietress runs brothels in other centers.

A Christian worker was talking to a lumberman whose gray hairs bespoke his age. Standing back from him, the lumberman held out a bottle of whiskey in one hand and his "turkey" (or clothes-kit) in the other, and said:—

"I have been working in the camps for twenty-five years, and these are all I have to show for it!"

Years spent earning good wages, $30 or

$35 per month and board, and all wasted in riotous living!

I visited a mining town where there are twenty-two saloons, two hundred and twenty-five children of school age, and where no gospel service of any kind had been held until recently. A mine owner said that the men never see two-thirds of the money they earn. The saloon keepers accept their time-checks for drinks, and collect the men's wages.

The settlers in that part of the country are too few to support a church, and children are growing up who have never been to a Sunday school. A woman drove fifteen miles not long since to a town where meetings were being held, and said:—

"I have come fifteen miles because I am so hungry for food for my soul. There are over fifty children in the settlement where I live, and we have nothing in the way of a gospel service, not even a Sunday school."

THE OPPORTUNITIES.

It is not as if the field presented insuperable difficulties. True, obstacles do exist. The diversity of language, the shifting character and the sparseness of population, the natural shyness and diffidence of lumberjacks, the difficulty of doing personal work in camp—these and other obstacles exist, apart altogether from the active opposition of the devil. But withal there is probably better opportunity for preaching the gospel here than in any other field, at home or abroad.

In the camps the men are gathered in groups, away from the distractions of the theatre and dance hall. They are not so occupied that they refuse attention. In company with Mr. J. O. Buswell and others, the writer visited four different camps. At each place we were received hospitably. The camp foremen were thoroughly in sympathy with our errand, and gave us right of way.

A SERVICE IN CAMP.

Camp services are usually held in the sleeping shanties in winter. The men have supper about 5.30 or 6 o'clock. After fixing up the horses for the night, they are all gathered in the sleeping shanty, smoking, reading, mending their gloves and clothes.

The leaders take their stand at one end, and proceed with song, prayer and addresses. When the novelty and strangeness have worn off, perhaps some who have learnt hymns down east can be induced to join in the singing. There is seldom any hostility or opposition, if the leaders show tact and good spirit—though I heard of one worker who was tossed in a blanket by the lumbermen. Often the men shake hands, and hope the leader will come again.

Sunday is always observed as a day of rest in camp.

Among the Indians, for nine weeks last winter, a lady worker was quarantined. They treated her kindly and loved her, giving her the name "Wa-sa-geezi-goqua," or "Light-sky woman."

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE.

Noble endeavors have been put forth in this field. In some cases pastors and other individuals have assumed the burden of supplying camps with reading matter. Occasionally young people's societies have held services in camp. The Y. M. C. A. has sometimes made it a part of its state work. One employer was mentioned who provided lamps and other reading facilities for his men, and supplied magazines, etc. Missions, like that of Mr. Nason at West Superior, sometimes send out missionaries into the camps.

But the most systematic effort has been made by the Northland and Bethany Association. This is an incorporation (undenominational), whose headquarters are at Mellen, Wis. J. O. Buswell, a former Y. M. C. A. secretary and now a minister in regular standing of the Congregational church, is its founder and superintendent.

The needs of the Northland were laid on Mr. Buswell's heart three or four years ago, and he resigned all to give his time to it. With him are now associated several missionaries or "chaplains," and twenty "Bethany sisters," who heard of the need and moved from Chicago to Mellen in answer to the call.

During the past year ten fields have been attended to more or less in detail by these workers.

The town of Mellen was selected as headquarters, because it is a railroad center, in the heart of the lumber district, the seat of a tannery and a sawmill, on elevated

ground back from Lake Superior, and yet within easy reach of other points.

Through Mr. Buswell's agitation, the needs of the Northland are becoming more widely known. For three years he has held a conference at Mellen each summer, at which Mr. Torrey, E. A. Marshall, Alex. Patterson, and other Bible teachers have taught. Not only has this served as a time of rest and study for the staff of chaplains and sisters, but it has also raised recruits and awakened interest in the enterprise.

WHAT MIGHT BE DONE.

What *has been* done so far has been largely by way of experiment and study, and is slight compared with what *might* and *ought to be* done, considering the proximity of the field, its hopeful features, its open doors, and its comparative freedom from deadly fever and other things that so often block missionary progress and extension.

The many problems that present themselves, while requiring separate and special consideration, are yet so woven and interwoven that they must be handled as one.

The great and pressing need is, first of all, better organization. At present the whole burden practically rests upon Mr. Buswell. He is backed and supported by three or four Christian business men, but he ought to be released from all executive detail except the control of the workers, so as to devote his whole time to the ministry of the word and prayer. Christian men, interested in the lumber, mines, tanneries, and railroads of the Northland, could doubtless be found who would also take enough interest in the souls of the men, women and children who populate that region for good or evil purposes, to form a board or committee, which, while not curtailing Mr. Buswell's freedom of operation, would yet assume the financial problem.

This better organization will call for more men and women workers, which in turn will demand larger financial support,—but a little money will go a very long way.

The plan of campaign ought to fall into two parts; the work in the camps, and in the towns.

1. From the nature of the camps, a regular ordained ministry is not feasible. As in the case of military camps, what it needs is a system of "chaplains"; men willing to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. Their hardships will be many. They will have to tramp from camp to camp with their Bibles and blankets, sleep in bunks with the lumbermen, etc. But it is a healthy life, with enough encouragement to keep the heart overflowing.

Chaplains can get every opportunity to preach. Living among the men, they will be able to engage in personal dealing with individuals, which is denied to visitors and strangers. Books, such as the Moody Colportage Library, are always acceptable to the men, and such munition of war should be plentifully supplied to the chaplains, to preach during their long absences.

Experience has shown that permanent results in the camps require some degree of regularity in the visits of the chaplains, the oftener the better.

2. Hand in hand with itinerant work in the camps should go work of a more permanent character in the towns. The Home Mission Boards have planted the flag in most of the older settlements, but new towns containing hundreds and (in some cases) thousands of people, have sprung up and gone along for years without being touched.

Churches, however, will not do all. There is great need of institutional or mission work, combining boarding house, baths, restaurant, banking, reading and correspondence room features with the ministry of the gospel. Then when the men come into town they will have some alternative place than the saloon and brothel.

Two young men, not over twenty-one years of age, sat by the roadside on the outskirts of a town. Said one:—

"We get our check, and the saloon-keeper cashes it for us, and what do we get out of it?"

"We get *hell* out of it," replied the other.

"Yes," said the first, "but there is no other place to go."

In the town work the Bethany sisters can be of great importance. Mr. Moody's idea of evangelizing the decaying village of New England by the effort of godly women can be applied to the rising towns of the Northland. At trifling expense they can settle in a town, go in and out among the people, minister to the sick and dying, organize

Sunday schools, hold Bible classes and meetings, and thus lay the foundation for a church.

There must be helpful interplay between the camp work and the town work. Chaplains can advertise the boarding house and direct men thither. They themselves can come into town at times to get rested and refreshed and cleaned up.

The Northland and Bethany Association has extensive machinery ready for use. It owns eighty acres of good land in the town of Mellen; also an old saloon building, called the "Mellen White House," well adapted for rescue work. Thirty-two acres more are owned, on the shore of a pretty lake, four miles out of Mellen. That Mr. Buswell and his associates have the confidence and good will of the townspeople, many of whom have been converted and blessed under their efforts, is proved by the fact that they are now erecting a cottage for the party on the eighty-acre lot.

During the third year of its operation, ending last August, the total budget of the Association was $757.75. With this princely sum Mr. Buswell financed his family and twenty-three workers for a year.

Surely this work should receive financial support from those who have moneyed interests in the Northland as a business proposition, if for no other reason; because it admittedly contributes to the morale and well-being of their employees. But many will doubtless contribute from philanthropic and Christian motives.

While results in the way of conversion cannot be fully tabulated, owing to the nature of the work, still Mr. Buswell can point to many homes that have been transformed by the regeneration of the parents. Forty-two fathers and mothers were converted in one year at one town. Revivals have occurred at several points, and many men and women have testified to the saving power of Jesus' blood.

The workers deserve our support and admiration. They are enduring many hardships and showing a true spirit of self-sacrifice for Jesus' sake, going without salary, and literally trusting God for food, clothes, and what little money they need. Nothing but the constraint of Christ's love and an intense desire to win souls could carry them through, and induce them to remain at their posts, for they enter into the actual experience of Paul, when he said: "In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by my own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness" (2 Cor. ii. 26, 27).

MONTHLY MISSIONARY SURVEY.

Robert E. Speer.

Different missionaries in China at present take different views of the situation there. Some see the bright side and some the dark. It depends both on the man and on the actual conditions which he sees. The Rev. George F. Fitch, superintendent of the Presbyterian Mission Press in Shanghai, is in a good position to judge of the present situation, and he is also a good man to judge. This is what he writes of facts in a recent letter:—

> You will be interested to learn that the work of the Press is prospering as never before. The demand for literature of all sorts is simply marvelous, and, as to printing, we have taken all the orders we can possibly fill for a long time to come, and have simply had to shut down and say we can do no more. Where we used to print two thousand as an edition, we are now, in many instances, printing ten thousand. We have just placed one order from the British and Foreign Bible Society, for over five thousand dollars worth of work, and on our order book we have over fifty books entered for printing, to say nothing of small folders, sheet tracts, etc., and not to mention the six or seven periodicals which come out monthly, all in Chinese. We have added nearly twenty men to our staff (or rather boys some of them are). We realize more than ever the need of the new buildings, and that we be-

gan them none too soon. So impressed are we all with the need of more room, and the vast expansion there is sure to be in the work, that I am conferring with the architect and the contractor with a view to making the subsidiary building on the new premises, which was arranged for one story (for bindery, etc.), into a two-story building.

As an illustration of the demand for books, I may mention that we are now mailing an order for books to Szechuen, West China, to consist of several hundred packages, on which the postage will be nearly or quite a dollar a package. Occasionally orders come in by telegraph. All our workmen are crowded to their utmost.

* * * * *

On the other hand another correspondent writes as follows on opinions:—

The political situation is most puzzling. It is impossible to predict with certainty what the future will bring. I was only able to attend an evening meeting of the Educational Triennial Meeting, but I had the privilege of meeting at odd times such men as Drs. Mateer, Sheffield, G. Reid, Rev. J. W. Lowrie, etc., and I was puzzled at the differences of opinion. The curious thing was that whilst the views of all were tinged with black pessimism, if one in the hearing of another became too doleful, and spoke of volcanic fires, Yung Lu's working for Yung Lu, and that worthy's (or unworthy's) little later swagger, etc., there was an anxiety on the part of some one or other to point out the many bright features. I was especially struck with Dr. Sheffield's optimism on such an occasion. He has had a good opportunity of judging, as he has been engaged the last year and a half in the work of reconstruction. He says there never was a period comparable to this past eight months for political and intellectual activity. This time, when the official, literary and mercantile classes are agitated with a mass of new thought as never before, he regards as a magnificent opportunity. He feels that the powers for progress are making an impression. I was interested in his reference to the native church, how their chastenings had led to a deepening of spiritual life, a greater vitality and courage.

The following is from the Monthly Summary of the Japanese Religious Press in the *Japan Weekly Mail* for April 5.

Under the title of "The Bacilli of Society in Japan" the *Yomiuri Shimbun* enumerates some fifteen evils to which young men and young women in Japan are exposed. Many of these are found in all Western countries, but some are either in kind or degree peculiarly Japanese. Here is the *Yomiuri's* list: (1) Excessive smoking. This becomes an incurable habit. (2) Offences that are made possible by badly lighted places of public resort. (3) The pictures of nude women and men exhibited under the pretence of furthering art, but with other purposes in view. (4) The suggestive allusions and indecent writing found on the third columns of certain small newspapers. (5) Indecent advertisements of a kind that are allowed in hardly any civilized country. France is bad in this respect, but Japan is far worse. (6) Love stories of a most improper kind, which abound and which are freely lent to young men and women by shops known as *kashihonya*. (7) Flower-card playing: (a) This is a useless waste of time; (b) it brings together young people who are not desirable companions for each other. (8) The *yose*, which corresponds to the music halls and low-class pantomimes of America. Constant attendance at such places and association with actresses undermines the morality of thousands. (9) *Sake*-drinking saloons. (10) Shows of many kinds. (11) Beer-halls. (12) Usurers. These lend money to students even at a high rate of interest, and the ruin of a young man often begins with the habit of borrowing from such people. (13) *Geisha* and prostitutes. (14) Bad lodging houses. These abound and in them all kinds of improper things go on. The absence of the influence of women in the home. Children observe how the father acts in defiance of his wife's opinions and feelings, and his irregularities are known, and too often imitated by his sons.

* * * * *

The conditions in Colombia continue to be most disheartening. A temperate correspondent writes of the existing situation:—

For the last two years this country has been passing through a civil war, sad enough in itself, and more so in many of the incidents connected with it. It is in great part a religious war, in which the Roman Catholic Church is deeply involved. The real springs of the war are not to be found in the dogmas of the church, that is the least element that enters into the strife ,and perhaps many of those who are in arms against the government are as really

believers in the dogmas of the church as those that are on the side of the government. The real question is the governmental theory of the church, being almost monarchical, favoring class legislation, special privileges for special persons, and a strong centralized government, somewhat like that at Rome in the Vatican. This the point over which the strife began. Although as the church allows it to be known on which side it is to be found, the opposition is outspoken against this element of the church, which is conservative in the extreme.

Passions have been growing hotter and hotter all the time, and the outlook is very dark indeed. Property has been taken and destroyed, and those who have suffered in this way are furious; those who have suffered at the hands of the government at that party, and those who have suffered at the hands of the revolutionists at their party. The country is prostrate and there are thousands of persons who are disaffected at the one or at the other.

Worse than the mere property question is that of the lives that have been sacrificed, not in battle alone, but as prisoners in the hands of the one or of the other party. There are no prisons that have any sanitary conditions, and many of them are situated in points that are unhealthy, so that to be taken prisoner, either by the one or the other party, has been almost to be condemned to death. In addition, the lack of care for the sick and the wounded in the field of battle, has raised the death rate to a frightful figure. This, under the circumstances, perhaps, could not be avoided, except by avoiding the war altogether, because the lack of medical assistance is unavoidable.

Then again within the last few months, it would appear that both parties have threatened to make this a war to the death, by shooting at least all officers that fall into their hands. It is said that the Revolutionists have threatened this, and the minister of war retaliates with a threat to do the same, even requiring the Revolutionists to release their prisoners on the threat that he will order Liberal prisoners to be shot unless it is done. The government has confiscated a great deal of Liberal property, and the Liberals have retaliated on the Conservatives in their power.

These passions are becoming so hot that they will not die out for years to come, and it is only to be expected that the country will go from worse to worse as a natural result. No one seems to see any prospect of real peace any time in the near future. Whichever party may be in power when the war is over, will have to contend with the opposition of the disaffected, and this will not be reasonable either. How could it be so after what has passed during the last two years? It does not seem possible. Under these circumstances it seems to me that the outlook for work is limited indeed.

* * * * *

A correspondent writes to the *Madras Times* of an interesting instance of the harmonious relations between Hinduism and Mohammedanism in his community. Here is an illustration of religious comity:—

> I reside in a small seaside town, inhabited chiefly by Hindus. It has for many years been the custom for the few Mohammedan residents of this and an adjoining village to build a small *taboot* and carry it in procession through the two villages on the last day of the Mohorrum; but the Mohammedans of the district are poor; and last year, owing to the partial failure of the monsoons, and the consequent high prices prevailing, the poor Mohammedans were so badly off that they found it impossible to get together enough money to build a *taboot;* so they sorrowfully decided not to have the usual annual procession. It seems that when the Hindu inhabitants of these villages heard that the usual procession was not to take place, they became alarmed, fearing lest the omission might bring down some great calamity upon them, and the merchants resolved to subscribe themselves and provide the needed funds, which was accordingly done, and they had the satisfaction of seeing the *taboot* carried through their streets.

* * * * *

The India Census Commissioner has issued his report of the religious result of the recent caucus. Its significance is so great that I quote it here in full.

The commissioner is greatly impressed with the increase of Christians, and asks for any information which may illustrate the statistics or throw light on the causes of the increase in the number of Christians.

Denomination.	Total Returned. Persons.	Males.	Females.	European and Allied Races. Males.	Females.	Distribution by Race. Eurasians. Males.	Females.	Natives. Males.	Females.
India	2,923,349	1,511,749	1,411,600	122,661	47,078	44,941	44,310	1,344,147	1,320,212
Abyssinian	9	2	7	–	1	–	–	2	6
Anglican Communion	453,712	254,315	199,292	81,732	30,192	18,049	17,732	154,534	151,373
Armenian	1,058	640	418	600	385	32	25	8	8
Baptist	220,863	112,255	108,608	1,198	910	991	1,021	110,066	106,677
Calvinist	98	72	26	54	15	–	–	18	11
Congregationalist	37,876	19,391	18,485	216	207	62	78	19,113	18,200
Greek	656	547	109	495	90	27	4	25	15
Indefinite beliefs	1,511	819	692	128	29	11	9	680	654
Lutheran and Allied Denominations	155,455	78,216	77,239	953	447	152	135	77,111	76,657
Methodist	76,869	41,299	35,570	4,494	1,504	1,060	1,360	35,745	32,706
Minor Denominations	22,735	11,675	11,060	473	189	118	102	11,084	10,769
Presbyterian	53,829	29,752	24,077	7,435	2,156	715	724	21,602	21,197
Quaker	1,309	749	560	15	15	3	1	731	544
Roman Catholic	1,202,039	606,888	595,151	23,635	10,329	23,156	22,541	560,097	562,281
Salvationist	18,960	9,826	9,134	54	46	6	7	9,766	9,081
Syrian (Jacobite and others)	248,741	126,595	122,146	2	1	–	1	126,593	122,144
Syrian (Roman)	322,586	163,607	158,979	–	3	–	–	163,607	158,976
Denominations not returned	105,143	55,101	50,042	1,177	559	559	570	53,365	48,913

OH! FOR A PERFECT TRUST!

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee. Isaiah xxvi. 3.

Oh! for the peace of a perfect trust,
My loving God, in Thee;
Unwavering faith, that never doubts
Thou choosest best for me.

Best, though my plans be all upset;
Best, though the way be rough;
Best, though my earthly store be scant;
In Thee I have enough.

Best, though my health and strength be gone;
Though weary days be mine;
Shut out from much that others have;
Not my will, Lord, but Thine!

And e'en though disappointments come,
They, too, are best for me,
To wean me from this changing world,
And lead me nearer Thee.

Oh! for the peace of a perfect trust,
That looks away from all;
That sees Thy hand in everything,
In great events or small;

That hears Thy voice—a Father's voice—
Directing for the best:—
Oh! for the peace of a perfect trust,
A heart with Thee at rest!

—*C. H. T.*

OUR JAPAN LETTER.

R. B. Peery, Ph. D.

One of the most important religious gatherings yet seen in Japan was the Eleventh General Conference of the Japan Evangelical Alliance, which was held in the Y. M. C. A. Hall, Tokyo, April 11 to 14, 1902. More than two hundred delegates, representing the different Protestant denominations, came together from all parts of the empire, making a large and unique gathering. The Japanese brethren were far in the majority, and everything was directed by them; but many missionaries were present, and took part in the discussions. The conferences of the Alliance are held only once in three years, and according to precedent there should have been no meeting until next year, but important questions in regard to the Forward Movement of last year, inaugurated by the Alliance, seemed to render it advisable to call a special meeting at this time.

The first article of the constitution of the Alliance reads: "The object of this society is to increase the concord between the various evangelical churches, to plan for cooperative work, and manifest in society the mind of Christ." Many workers have felt that a clear definition of the term "evangelical" is necessary to the proper carrying out of the aim of the association. Particularly in the prosecution of the *Taikyo Dendo* (Forward Movement) was great confusion and embarrassment experienced because of the lack of a clear definition of this word. Some speakers who took a prominent part in that movement do not believe in the divinity of Christ; and it occasionally happened that two men sat on one platform to address the same audience, one of whom believed that Christ is God, while the other one believed that he is a mere man, and that to worship Him is superstition and idolatry. The condition was intolerable, and it became imperative that the Alliance clearly record its interpretation of "evangelical." So the Central Committee proposed the following statement to the Conference, as an amendment to the constitution:—

"By evangelical churches we mean those who regard the Bible as the perfect rule, both for our faith and practice; and who believe that our Lord Jesus Christ, who came down to this world for men and for their salvation, is God."

The adoption of this definition would exclude some prominent pastors from membership in the Alliance, and participation in its work; and, as was expected, a very heated debate followed. Some opposed the statement because they do not believe Christ is God; more opposed it because they thought it unwise and unnecessary at this time. But most of the prominent workers contended earnestly that the step was necessary; that the evangelical element must cut loose from the unevangelical at some time, and that confusion and harm would be avoided by doing it at once. When the vote was finally called for there were eighty-one yeas, forty-four nays, and eight neutrals. As amendments to the constitution require a two-thirds majority the motion was lost. Later the Central Committee presented a memorial to the effect that the above statement be adopted, not as an amendment, but as a practical working measure. It was voted on at once without discussion, and a majority of over two-thirds favored the memorial. Thus the largest and most representative Christian body in Japan unequivocally places itself on record as accepting the divinity of Christ, and excludes from its fellowship those who believe otherwise. That this positive ground has been taken so early in the history of the church in Japan is a cause for profound gratitude to Almighty God. It is also a hopeful sign for the future of the work here.

The other important question before the Conference was in regard to future *Taikyo Dendo*. It was unanimously decided to continue the work throughout the present year; and the period from May 10 to June 30 was appointed as a suitable time for the first campaign. The provincial work was left entirely in the hands of the local committees; the central body simply holding itself in readiness to give advice

and send out speakers when asked for. The call of the Central Committee to the churches is a stirring appeal, well worth reproducing here.

"The Twentieth Century Forward Evangelistic Movement of last year was without doubt the greatest event in the history of Christianity since its introduction into Japan. It brought new life to a dying church, and was as if an old, decrepit man had taken on the energy and enthusiasm of youth. Though human defects marred its perfect success, yet by Divine grace it was made the means of giving new life and power to believers, promoting the union of all sects in earnest effort for the salvation of souls, leading several thousands of persons to Christ and into His church, and giving the outside world a new sense of the power of Christianity in Japan. These are points which no one doubts, and we cannot refrain from continuing to give thanks to God for these blessed results. The thing to be written in large characters in reference to this movement, however, is not simply the enthusiasm with which it was carried on, and the unusual results which followed, but that it marked the beginning of a new epoch of forward movements which are destined to result in the Christianization of our Japanese Empire, just as the conversion of the three thousand on the day of Pentecost was but the inauguration of a world-wide movement which has ever since continued to sweep millions of souls into the kingdom of God. But if we settle down with self-satisfied ease, and lay down our weapons as if the battle were already won, the grounds for rejoicing over last year's victories will be taken away. And so we are now seriously planning for a new and still more vigorous campaign.

"We are conscious that there are many difficulties in the way, but not one-tenth as many as we faced a year ago. We have the experience gained last year; the attitude of society is much more favorable; and the cry of the people for the new life Christ gives has become more definite and urgent. This is no time for schemes or inactivity. Let us arise and with new life go forth in our Master's name. Is not our Lord Jesus himself our leader? Surely 'we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.' With apostolic fervor burning in our hearts, let us go forth to manifold greater triumphs than we have yet seen,—such indeed as shall shake heaven and earth. According to our faith it shall be unto us. 'For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.' As to the arts of war, we pray for greater skill than we displayed last year; but let faith in our God and in Christ be still simpler and more childlike. Let us 'be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.'"

A touchingly interesting feature of this Conference was the presentation on the last day, by Rev. H. Kozaki, of the aged widow of Einosuke Ichikawa, the first Protestant martyr in Japan, who was seized and imprisoned for his faith thirty years ago in Kyoto, where he died in close confinement. The report of the Conference says:—

"It is not often that we see men shed tears in Japan; but as this old lady of seventy-six years was led to the platform and the story told of the sufferings she and her husband had undergone for Christ's sake, there were few dry eyes in the large congregation. Thanksgivings went up to God that we now live in a day of religious liberty in Japan, especially when we were informed by Dr. Greene, whose Japanese teacher Ichikawa had been before his imprisonment, that this very case of religious persecution, which had been brought to the notice of the government in Washington, was the occasion of Prince Iwakura's writing home from America that if Japan wished for a satisfactory treaty with America she must grant religious toleration. The taking down of the notice boards prohibiting Christianity immediately followed, and in due time religious freedom was embodied in the constitution. It was deemed fitting that, as no one had ever found the grave of this noble martyr, a monument should be erected in the Aoyama Cemetery to his memory, and thirty-one *yen* were collected for this purpose on the spot."

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Some important changes have recently taken place at the Doshisha University. The former president, Mr. Saibara, felt constrained to resign because of a contemplated trip abroad, to extend over several years. The principal, Mr. Hirotsu, resigned some time ago, and since then the school has been without a head. The Board of Trustees has unanimously elected the Hon. K. Kataoka, for many years president of the Lower House, as president of the University; and he has also consented to serve as principal in place of Mr. Hirotsu. One of the trustees writes:—

"The election of a president and principal at the present junction of affairs was fraught with no small danger. That all the directors have expressed their entire readiness to cast their votes for Mr. Kataoka, and that he has expressed his willingness to accept an election, is to us here a clear evidence of the hand of God guiding this

school. Known from the Emperor's palace to the farmers' huts as a Christian patriot, modest but sterling in character, loyal both to his Divine Lord and to his Imperial Master, a leader among his people, he is the most worthy successor to our beloved Neesima, and under his leadership a new era lies before our Doshisha. May God spare him to us for many years!"

* * * * *

Missionaries to non-Christian lands often meet with peculiar enquirers, whose like is never seen in Christendom. A Shinto priest from a neighboring country town has been coming here regularly to learn of Christianity, and he seems deeply interested. He walks six or eight miles to attend our services, has read a good deal of the Bible, and has carefully studied the catechism which we teach to our candidates. This man professes to believe in Jesus, and has asked several times to be baptized. I think he is thoroughly in earnest, too. *But he is unwilling to give up his position as a Shinto priest,* as that would deprive him of his living. He claims that there is nothing in his work contrary to the spirit of Christianity, as he worships no idols, and engages in no heathen rites, but is simply a guardian of the temple and cemetery. He would gladly give up his position if we would find him another one in which he could make a living; but as he is a middle-aged man, and has spent all his life in a temple, I fear we could not use him. We are urging upon him the necessity of cutting loose from Shinto and seeking his support in some other way, as a necessary step to baptism; and I hope he may yet be led to do this.

Some time ago I had another strange case of a similar nature. Two young Buddhist priests connected with a temple here in our city came quietly to learn of Christianity, and after a time were convinced of its superiority to Buddhism. But the old faith was furnishing them a living, and if they embraced the new they wanted to live by it too. So they asked to be secretly baptized, and given a course in theology, that they might become evangelists. In the meanwhile they would continue to live in the temple, ostensibly as priests. Thus they could live by Buddhism while they studied, and then when their course was finished they would throw off the mask and appear openly as Christian ministers. The men were in earnest, and did not see anything wrong with this scheme—but it did not commend itself to me. As we could neither let them be Christians and live by Buddhism nor provide their support ourselves they are still serving as priests. I trust the truth they have learned will yet impel them to break loose from the false faith at all hazards.

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In my last letter I stated that all Methodist missions in Japan had agreed upon a plan for one united Japanese Methodist church. At the time of writing one mission had not yet acted on the question, but I was assured that its action would be favorable. To my surprise it has since declined to endorse this plan, although it endorses the general desire for union. It is not likely that the action of this mission will very much retard the movement, as the real decision lies with the home societies.

Saga, Japan.

Religious Thought and Activity.

Day of Prayer for Public Schools. The fourteenth of September has been appointed as a day of prayer for public and private schools. This has the approval of the Presbyterian Assembly, which directed the churches of this denomination to observe this day. This is quite different from the day of prayer for schools and colleges, but even more essential for, while, as the circular which has been sent out shows, there are not more than 110,000 college students in the country, the school children reach the enormous number of 16,782,135.

Yale Mission in China. Every one interested in foreign missions will watch with keen interest the new

The Drink Evil in France. In a lecture recently given by Dr. Philibert, he stated that in a village of Brittany, with a population of one thousand two hundred and twenty-four, there were eleven drinking-places, and that the monthly consumption of alcohol per head of the population was not less than sixty pints, with forty-seven and one-half pints of wine and fermented drink added. On the thirty-first of October, it was found that out of every one hundred drinks sold on that day, sixty-seven were of brandy in various forms, twelve of rum, two of absinthe, and twenty-one of wine or fermented liquor.

He added that one-half of those born in that place died before the age of twenty, and that often there were not twelve young men a year who were sufficiently robust to be passed for the army.

In another village in the department of the Somme, it is said that there are not less than twenty-eight drinking-places, two breweries, and three distilleries, and this for a population of only eight hundred persons. —*McAll Mission.*

A Christian Congress Among Colored Men. A congress of the leading colored Christians of different denominations will meet in Atlanta, Ga., August 6-11. The object of this conference is thus defined in their call:—

> They come together, not to petition for rights, or whine about their present lot, or to weep over the sins of their race; nor do they come to find fault with any man or section, or to agitate any question of doubtful propriety, or one that can possibly call forth a dissenting voice; neither do they come to lash the waters of prejudice or to curse the past condition of the slavery of their fathers, or to prophesy smooth and beautiful things, or a dark and thorny path for the race. They are neither pessimists nor prophets; neither stoics nor epicureans. But they come with malice towards none, and charity for all, to sit and think, to pray and plan; to discuss, suggest and work; to put their shoulders to the wheel to reach the unreached of the race; to check the growing spirit of crime among the young; to stamp out vagrancy; to elevate their homes, purify the social and religious atmosphere of the same; to improve the religious worship in their churches; to inquire for the true basis of Christian piety; to develop a real spiritual life among Christians; to attack the evils of society among them, such as the nefarious drink habit, Sabbath desecration, the prodigality of money and the brood of evils that swim in these murky waters.
>
> In sum, the Christian Negro of the land proposes to strike hard at the evils that prey at his vitals and to cut them off root and branch and lay the firm foundations for a pure and noble life. In this effort the white people of the South have joined hands with those of the North, to encourage the race with substantial aid and with sympathetic counsel. Special mention must be made of the whites of Atlanta, where the congress is to sit. The editor of the *Constitution,* the Hon. Clark Howell, and the editor of the *Journal,* Mr. F. H. Richardson, together with the business managers of these periodicals, have given and are still giving every substantial encouragement within their power to the movement.

It is expected that ten thousand delegates will be in attendance and from the spirit which prompts the movement as well as from the sound judgment which has characterized its origin it may be expected to result in practical helpfulness to the race. Its program will discuss the religious, moral and social needs of the race as well as the best means for advancing it along educational and material lines.

Work at Home and Abroad.

Receipts for June, 1902.

Pandita Ramabai's Work for India's Child Widows:

W. C. B., Lee Center, Ill.	$ 9 00	
L. H. A., Chicago, Ill.	17 50	
L. H. C., Greensboro, N. C.	26 08	
A Friend, New York City	25 00	
Presbyterian C. E. Society, Fargo, Ill.	3 00	
F. H. G., Savannah, Ga.	5 00	
Anonymous	5 92	
A. J. J., Canada	2 00	
Mrs. W. L., Montreal, Can.	2 00	
		$95 50

Mr. J. D. McEwen's Work in South America:

Col. O., Halifax, N. S.	$ 20 00	
D. B. B., Halifax, N. S.	10 00	
Dr. F. W., Halifax, N. S.	5 00	
Presbyterian Church, Lunenburg, N. S.	20 00	
Methodist Church, Lunenburg, N. S.	3 00	
Congregational Church, Truro, N. S.	5 60	
W. D. L., Westamont, Que.	5 00	
W. M., Westamont, Que.	2 00	
C. A., Montreal, Que.	5 00	
H. J. H., Montreal, Que.	5 00	
C. G., Montreal, Que.	1 00	
W. S., Montreal, Que.	2 00	
A. E. H., Montreal, Que.	5 00	
H. V., Montreal, Que.	10 00	
G. A. G., Montreal, Que.	25 00	
Friends, Montreal, Que.	30 00	
G. H., Montreal, Que.	2 00	
M. H., Montreal, Que.	2 00	
W. S. L., Montreal, Que.	5 00	
H. B. & S., Montreal, Que.	2 00	
M. D. S., Pittston, Pa.	2 00	
Sunday School, Roxborough, N. S.	5 00	
C. E. Society, Roxborough, N. S.	15 00	
P. J. McE., Roxborough, N. S.	5 00	
L. McE., Roxborough, N. S.	1 00	
S. McE., Roxborough, N. S.	1 00	
L. McE., Maxville, N. S.	1 00	
Mrs. McC., Ottawa, N. S.	2 00	
D. McD., St. Elmo, N. S.	2 00	
D. McD., St. Elmo, N. S.	5 00	
D. K., St. Elmo, N. S.	5 00	
J. J. McE., St. Elmo, N. S.	5 00	
M. McE., Moose Creek, N. S.	10 00	
J. F. D., Halifax, N. S.	9 00	
		$232 60

Miss Millard's Work for India's Blind Famine Sufferers:

Mrs. W. H. W., Alexandria, Pa.	$ 10 00	
L. I. B., Edmunton, Ky.	3 00	
		$ 13 00

Dr. Paton's Work in the New Hebrides:

A Friend, New York City	$ 25 00

Moody Memorial Endowment Fund:

A Friend, New York City	$ 25 00

Bishop Thoburn's Work in India:

A Friend, New York City	$ 30 00	
Mrs. W. H. W., Alexandria, Pa.	30 00	
		$ 60 00

Free Distribution of Literature in Prisons:

L. H. B., Norton Heights, Conn.	$ 1 00	
E. T. B., Springfield, Mass.	3 00	
A Friend, New York City	5 00	
B. L. L., Barnet, Vt.	1 00	
		$ 10 00

Northfield Seminary:

L. H. A., Chicago, Ill.	$ 10 00	
B. H. M., Cottage City, Mass.	2 00	
		$ 12 00

Mount Hermon Boys' School:

G. L. R., Shortsville, N. Y.	$ 1 00

Free Distribution of Record of Christian Work:

B. L. L., Barnet, Vt.	$ 1 00

J. McAuley's Mission:

M. D. L., Carbondale, Pa.	$ 5 00

Andrew Murray's Work in South Africa:

A Friend, New York City	$ 15 00

CALENDAR FOR AUGUST.

Aug.	1-17.	Northfield General Workers' Conference.
	6.	Negro Christian Conference, Atlanta, Ga.
	7-19.	Old Salem Chautauqua, Petersburg, Ill.
	8-17.	Christian and Missionary Alliance Convention, Beulah Park, Ohio.
	9-18.	Goshen Park Assembly, Mass.
	10-21.	Minnesota Baptist Summer Assembly, Lake Minnetonka, Minn.
	10-25.	Bible Conference, Montreat, S. C.
	22-26.	Ministers' Institute, Lake Minnetonka, Minn.
	20-31.	Christian and Missionary Alliance, Atlanta, Ga.
	19-24.	Y. M. C. A. World's Conference, Christiania, Norway.
	22-Sept. 2.	Y. W. C. A. Western Conference, Lake Geneva, Wis.

Personalia.

A successful mission has been conducted in Lewiston, Ill., by **Dr. Smiley** and **Mr. M'Kinsey.**

The **Rev. George Jackson, B. A.,** of Edinburgh, one of the foremost Methodists of Great Britain, is in this country.

E. A. Marshall has started on a tour of visitation to the mission fields of the world. He requests the prayers of all the readers of this paper.

The **Rev. Charles Inglis,** of London, will begin a ministers' mission to this country on October 19 at Auburn, N. Y. His address there will be Care Rev. Doctor Hubbard, Auburn.

The death of **Prof. Halliday Douglas** has removed from Canadian educational circles one of its ablest and best loved workers. He was cut down in the full vigor of manhood, and Canada is feeling, and will feel for long, the great loss experienced.

The Prayer Union.

The church of the land has a duty to perform in the Philippines as well as the government. While we cannot all go there for missionary work, we certainly can pray, and our language is intelligible to God when it would not be to the Filipinos.

Northfield Items.

A special feature of the General Christian Workers' Conference will be a series of lectures by Rev. H. W. Pope, of the Northfield Extension Movement, on Methods of Christian Work. Under this theme the following subjects will be discussed:—

The Christian's Debt to the Christless.
The Man with a Message.
The Art of Christian Conversation.
Leading Men to Christ.
Open Air and Tent Work.
How to Study the Bible.
Everybody's Mission.
The Conversion of Children.

The presence of Rev. John Kelman at this gathering will be specially appreciated by young people, to whom he speaks with unusual acceptability. His addresses at Northfield Student Conference reminded his hearers of the late Prof. Drummond, and no one in recent years has so appealed to those who have had honest doubts in their religious life. Other speakers from abroad who are to be at Northfield in August are Rev. F. B. Meyer, Rev. Stephen Band, M. A., and Rev. W. Ross.

Biblical Notes and Queries.

C. I. Scofield, D. D.

J. L. G., Tennille, Ga.

Q. Will those who have rejected the gospel, and are alive when Christ comes, have a chance then to accept Him?

A. The second coming of Christ is in two phases. He descends into the air for the church, which, whether sleeping or waking, is caught up to meet Him there. Then follows the great tribulation during which an elect number out of Israel and "a great multitude, that no man could number," of Gentiles will be saved (Rev. vii. R. V.). This period is ended by the glorious appearing of the Lord (Matt xxiv. 29, 30), which event ends the gospel probation, for then follows the judgment of the living nations and their division (Matt. xxv. 31-46).

Q. Is the same resurrection referred to in 1 Thess. iv. 16, and Rev. xx. 4?

A. Not precisely, though both together constitute "the first resurrection." 1 Thess. iv. 16 describes the resurrection of all who are Christ's up to the moment of the rapture; Rev. xx. 4, the resurrection of the tribulation saints, but both are included in Rev. xx. 4-6.

Q. Is the bride identical with the body of Christ, and are both peculiar to this dispensation?

A. Yes, as appears from Eph. i. 22, 23, with Eph. v. 25-32.

A. F. F., Bournemouth, England.

1. The general outline of the Revelation is indicated in the commission given to John to write the book (Rev. i. 19), "Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter" (literally "after these things," *i. e.*, after "the things which are").

The things which John had seen are, obviously, contained in the first chapter—the Patmos vision of the glorified Christ in the midst of the candlesticks, or lampstands (the churches, i. 20).

Putting ourselves back at the date of the apocalypse, say, A. D. 96, and looking about for "things which are," we should at once be attracted by the churches as having for the time taken the witnessing place in the counsels of God formerly held by Israel. Accordingly, we find John next writing about churches. Seven then existing churches in Asia Minor are addressed in messages of like structure but varying content. At this late date there can be no difficulty in interpreting these messages as prophetical—ecclesiastical history written in advance. For, laying these messages by the side of the actual history of the churches, it appears that they have passed through phases of development in precise accord with the sevenfold foreview. Ephesus gives the general state at the close of the apostolic period: Smyrna, the period of the great persecutions down to the conversion of Constantine; Pergamos, the period of declension out of which Thyatira, or the papacy, developed; Sardis, the Protestant Reformation, and Philadelphia and Laodicea, phases of Protestantism. Thyatira, or Romanism, and Philadelphia and Laodicea, or the last condition of Protestantism, go on to the coming of the Lord.

The third general division of the book extends, therefore, from iv. 1 to the end, and is made up of prophecies which will be fulfilled after the true church is caught away and the Laodicean residue spewed out of the mouth of Him Whose Name Laodicea has brought into contempt. It is in vain to look into history for the events recorded in the third general division. They may have had shadow and illustrative fulfillments, but the final and real fulfillment waits the departure of the church.

2. The structure of chapter xii. is as follows: The woman is Israel with her twelve starred crown. The dragon is Satan with the fallen angels. The man-child is Christ, as is evident from verse 5, with Psalms ii. and Rev. ii. 27. Verse 6 takes up Israel at the beginning of the great tribulation, persecuted by Satan, but protected and preserved.

The interpretation which makes the church the woman is involved at once in the absurdity of making the church the mother of Christ. No system of interpretation of prophecy is free from difficulties, but these may be overcome by prayerful study, and a resolute determination not to so explain things as to explain them away.

W. R. P., New London, Conn.

No. Matthews xxv. has not been fulfilled. Those events await the return of the Lord, as the chapter itself thrice declares.

G. E. McC., Toronto, Ont.

You ask if there is any qualification of Paul's statement (Rom. vi. 14) that the believer is not under the law?

The answer is that the apostle immediately adds a tremendously important qualification. The believer is "not under the law, *but under grace.*" God's grace secures the doing of the will of God in and by the believer, through the power of the Holy Spirit (Rom. viii. 2-4). "Not under the law," standing alone is antinomianism. "Not under the law, but under grace," is the gospel liberty, and ensures loving obedience—something the law never did, nor ever can do. The remedy for lawlessness is not preaching the law, but preaching grace. The expression, "Not under the law as a means of life, but under the law as a rule of life," is an utterly un-Biblical invention. It is the rule of life which is directly before the mind of the Spirit in Rom. vi.-viii.

BIBLE NOTES

FOR

DAILY DEVOTIONS.

EDITED BY

REV. G. CAMPBELL MORGAN.

AUGUST, 1902.

Friday, 1st. *Luke ix. 1 to 9.* "He gave them power and authority." This is *force* and *right.* Thus He met their need and manifested His own majesty. If in the carrying out of the mission on which the Master sent these men, they had any dignity and influence, these resulted from the equipment He bestowed. They went forth poor men, without any provision for the journey, and without two coats. There was nothing in their appearance or surroundings that would attract the notice of the people or command their attention. The power and authority of Jesus was their sole glory, and it was enough. The Master's estimate of the importance of their mission is shown by His command that they should shake off the dust from their feet as a testimony against those who received them not. How important it is that those who go on the Lord's errands should have His equipment, and, moreover, that they should be therewith content. The rumors of this ministry of power reached Herod. He was startled, for had he not silenced the objectionable voice which had interfered with his unholy doings? As if that voice could ever be silenced! Man may break the instrument through which the wind breathes its messages of truth, but it can never be silenced, nor will it fail for means of expression. If thou shut thyself within the house having broken the harp æolian, the same wind will sound thy dirge through chinks and crannies of thy dwelling.

From B. Bouchier:

"He desired to see Jesus." The aged Simeon, too, desired to see Jesus, and when he saw Him, he said, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." Certain Greeks, too, came to Philip and said, "Sir, we desire to see Jesus," and when Jesus heard it, He said, "The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified." Thomas desired to see his risen Lord, and when he saw Him, he exclaimed, "My Lord and my God!"

It is a striking sentence with which Luke concludes his narrative—"He desired to see Jesus." Was his the desire of a longing, holy heart? The evangelist leaves us in no doubt, for his desire was fulfilled; he did see Jesus. And I cannot but think that there is much significance in the fact that the same writer who records the desire is the only one who gives us the account of its accomplishment. Herod desired to see Jesus, and when he saw Him, "he and his men of war set at nought and mocked him."

Herod will once more see Jesus, and it will not be then Herod "mocking Jesus," but, saith the Lord: "Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, I also will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh."

Saturday, 2nd. *Luke ix. 10 to 17.* The apostles having returned from their first mission the Lord took them to Bethsaida. It was here that the multitude, having exceeded the possibilities of the victualing resources of the disciples, were fed by the Master. This feeding is a wonderful object lesson to all those who are called to work among masses of people.

1. The disciples bring all they possess to Him, with a keen sense of its insufficiency.
2. They then in obedience to His word

proceed to make the people sit down even though the possibility of feeding them is absurd.

3. They then receive back from His hands the bread they had first given Him, and with it feed the whole company.

4. The gathered fragments far exceed the amount first brought to the Master.

It is a suggestive and beautiful picture of His ability to do much with our little. The lessons for us are that our duty is to yield Him all, and then in absolute obedience to do His bidding, no matter how mere prudence and worldly wisdom may question as to the issue.

From Alexander Maclaren:

Our Lord leads up to the miracle by forcing home on the minds of the disciples the extent of the need, and the utter inadequacy of their resources to meet it, and by calling on them and the crowd for an active obedience, which must have seemed ludicrous to many of them. The strange suggestion that the disciples should feed the crowd must have appeared to them absurd, but it was meant to bring out the clear recognition of the smallness of their supply. Therein lie great lessons. Commands are given and apparent duties laid on us, in order that we may find out how impotent we are to do them. It can never be our duty to do what we cannot do; but it is often our duty to attempt tasks to which we are conspicuously inadequate, in the confidence that He Who gives them has laid them on us to drive us to Himself and there to find sufficiency. The best preparation of His servants for their work in the world is the discovery that their own stores are small. Those who have learned that it is their task to feed the multitude, and who have said, "We have no more than such and such scanty resources," are prepared to be the distributors of His all-sufficient supply.

Sunday, 3rd. *Luke ix. 18 to 27.* This quiet conversation with His disciples is very beautiful. Here He begins the second stage in their training. He has led them on until they are ready to confess Him as the long looked-for Deliverer. Note how He narrows the circles. First He asks for popular opinion concerning Him, and the answers reveal the attempts of unenlightened humanity to account for Him. Then the opinion of the disciples, and Peter makes his confession, the result of Divine illumination. Now as He turns toward the supreme work of the cross, He prepares them by announcing it to them. He very solemnly points to the narrow way of the cross and suffering, and in language that there could have been no misunderstanding shows them that those who will follow Him must do so through the gate of personal crucifixion. Then from that darkness of death and suffering He sends forth the light of crowning glory. He, the Son of man, is coming again "in his own glory, and of the Father, and of the holy angels." Our relation to that glory, whether we shall share it, or be spurned by the radiant One Who is to be its center, depends upon our present attitude towards Him. "Let us therefore go forth unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach."

From W. M. Hay Aitken:

Does the cross terrify you by its dark shadow? Stay for a moment, while you listen to these solemn words, "What is a man profited if he should gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" You are running away from the cross. But there is a cross being prepared for you, and while you are flying away from the unfriendly shadow, behind the veil there is a ghastlier cross being erected for you. You are asserting your own will, you are loving your own life. You shall "lose it," and lose it by your own irrational self-love. You have elected to live for yourself; you are running after what you conceive, in your blindness and deception, to be your own self-interest. Do you not find, even now, O child of the world, that your self-interest is deluding you? The bubbles you grasp burst in your hand; the flowers you gather fade at your touch; as you go along life's journey you are conscious of the approach—ever becoming more and more terrible—of a cloud of darker sorrow, while the present sense of blank disappointment becomes more and more appalling. Years creep on upon you; the effect of age is felt; the body is shattered as you near the end of your journey; the human strength decays; the joys of life are withered, and, one by one, as your earthly possessions slip from your grasp—then, what then? "Say ye to the wicked, It shall be ill with him, for the reward of his hands shall be given unto him." You have fled from suffering into the arms of suffering; you have endeavored to escape from the cross, you find your portion in the cross for all eternity. Thus it is that man prepares his own doom, and is himself the creator of his own misery.

Monday, 4th. *Luke ix. 28 to 36.* The transfiguration of Jesus embraces far outlying regions in its suggestiveness. The presence of Moses and Elijah, the lawgiver and reformer, talking with Jesus, the Sav-

iour, is a striking proof of the connection of the dispensations, and the evolution of Divine purpose through them all. Their presence lights up the spirit world for us. Those who have departed are still in a region of intelligent interest in the things of God upon the earth. The transfigured Master is moreover a revelation of life in the spiritual sphere. Luke tells us that it was "as he was praying" that "the fashion of his countenance was altered." It is in the realm of perfect communion that life takes on its highest possibilities. How tenderly the sleep and blundering of the disciples is dealt with. "They feared as they entered the cloud." How natural that they should! "And a voice came out of the cloud." And then Jesus only! Thank God for all the dark clouds which we enter with fear! Out of them the Voice ever comes! And then everything vanishes save Jesus only! And what more can the heart need?

"If I've Jesus, Jesus only,
I possess a cluster rare,
He's the Lily of the Valley,
And the Rose of Sharon fair."

From R. H. McKim:

Learn from this scene the true relation of the contemplative to the active life. We cannot spend our lives on the mountain-top of vision, or of ecstacy, or of contemplation. "It is good to be here," says the mystic, "beholding the vision of the glory of God." "It is good to be here," says the ascetic, "apart from the world, disciplining the soul, striving to obtain purity of heart." "It is good to be here," says the student, "revelling in the contemplation of the Divine, beholding the glory of God in history, in philosophy, in revelation." But we may not thus spend our lives. The voice of God calls us down to grapple with the problems and the duties which wait on every side. Sin is here; sorrow is here; darkness is here; unbelief is here. If God has revealed to us the glory of His Son, it is not that we should give our lives up to its contemplation, but that we should gain thereby inspiration and strength to tread the path of duty or of suffering, that we should consecrate ourselves to the work of lightening the darkness, and lessening the suffering, and cleansing the defilement of the world in which we live.

Tuesday, 5th. *Luke ix. 37 to 56.* What startling pictures we have in this paragraph of the failure of the disciples.

1. Verses 37-43. Inability to cope with the demon, even though He had given them power over "all demons" (ix. 1).

2. Verses 44 and 45. Inability to understand His words, and fear to ask Him.

3. Verses 46-48. Unholy wrangling as to greatness, revealing selfishness in the most pronounced form.

4. Verses 49 and 50. A desire to forbid one who was accomplishing the Master's work in His name, because the stranger did not follow with them. This was a new manifestation of the self-life, jealousy for the supposed importance of office.

5. Verses 51-56. Apparent zeal for the Master, but utterly false, for it was a contradiction of His love and tenderness. This was the subtlest form of the self-life; an outward zeal which contradicts the very One Whom it pretends to serve.

How these verses should drive us to searching of heart as to the motives that underlie our service. Read the passage a second time to see how gloriously the strength and meekness of Jesus shone forth in His dealings with these men.

From Richard Chenevix Trench:

There is no slight cast here on the spirit of Elias. Both spirits, that which breathed through and informed the prophets and saints of the old covenant, as well as that which should inform the disciples of the new, are Divine. The difference between them is not of opposition, but only of time and degree. The spirit of the Old Testament was a spirit of avenging righteousness; God was teaching men His holiness by terrible things in righteousness. But the spirit of the new covenant, not contrary, but brighter, is that of forgiving love; in it He is overcoming man's evil with His good. Each economy has one predominating tone from which it takes its character. The two apostles were for the moment failing to recognize this. In a confusion of old and new, and not knowing of "what manner of spirit" they were, they had fallen back on the rudiments of God's education of His people, when it was their privilege to go on unto perfection, and to teach the world the far greater might of meekness and of love. They were rebuked for choosing that which, perfectly good in its own time, was only not good now because a better had come in; for returning to the lower level of the old covenant when Christ had lifted them up, if only they had understood this, to the higher level of the new.

Wednesday, 6th. *Luke ix. 57 to 62.* A passage to be read again and again until one great truth is burnt upon heart and

mind. To be a follower of Jesus, there can be no compromises and no delays. He will brook no division of loyalty or interest. The most natural earthly ties must take a place of secondary importance when we step out upon the pathway of discipleship. This attitude is impossible in any activity of the self-life. It is only under the teaching and discipline of the Spirit that we can sing—

"I take, O Cross, thy shadow,
For my abiding place;
I ask no other sunshine than
The sunshine of His face;
Content to let the world go by,
To know no gain nor loss—
My sinful self my only shame,
My glory all the Cross."

—*E. C. Clephane.*

From J. C. Ryle:

"No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." We learn from this saying that it is impossible to serve Christ with a divided heart. If we are looking back to anything in this world we are not fit to be disciples. Jesus will not share His throne with anyone,—no, not with our dearest relatives. He must have all our heart, or none. No doubt we are to honor father and mother, and love all around us. But when love to Christ and love to relatives come in collision, Christ must have the preference. We must be ready like Abraham, if needs be, to come out from kindred and father's house for Christ's sake. We must be prepared in case of necessity, like Moses, to turn our backs even on those who have brought us up, if God calls us, and the path is plain. Such decided conduct may entail sore trials on our affections. It may wring our hearts to go contrary to the opinions of those we love. But such conduct may sometimes be positively necessary to our salvation, and without it, when it becomes necessary, we are unfit for the kingdom of God. The times are undoubtedly much changed since our Lord spoke these words. Not many are called upon to make such real sacrifices for Christ's sake as when Christ was upon earth. But the heart of man never changes. The difficulties of salvation are still very great. The atmosphere of the world is still very unfavorable to spiritual religion. There is still a need for thorough, unflinching, whole-hearted decision, if we would reach heaven. Let us aim at nothing less than this decision. Let us be willing to do anything, and suffer anything, and give up everything for Christ's sake. It may cost us something for a few years, but great will be the reward in eternity.

Thursday, 7th. *Luke x. 1 to 16.* The mission of the seventy is only recorded by Luke. The points of interest are those which teach us the laws of all work for the Master. Everything depends upon the words in verse 3. "I SEND YOU." Note seven points.

1. Commission. Verse 3. "Go your ways." *"I send you."*

2. Safety. Verse 3. "In the midst of wolves." *"I send you."*

3. Provision. Verse 4. "Carry no purse," etc. *"I send you."*

4. Haste. Verse 4. "Salute no man." *"I send you."*

5. Message. Verse 5. "Peace to this house." *"I send you."*

6. Importance. Verses 6-15. "Blessing or judgment." *"I send you."*

7. Solemn dignity. Verse 16. "You" and "Me." *"I send you."*

Let none of us go unless He sends us. The prophet of old when he volunteered in answer to the Divine call, "Who will go?" yet prayed *"Send me."* When we know He sends us, then every form of doubt and anxiety passes out of our lives, and we go forward with courage and gladness.

From Alexander Maclaren:

Note the clear recognition of degrees in criminality and retribution, measured by degrees of light. Note the selection of the Gentile cities of worst fame: Sodom with her crimes, Tyre and Sidon—the very emblems, in the Prophets, of proud enmity to God. And these sties of lust and greed are to have a lighter doom than the cities of Israel. Why? Because to reject Christ is the worst of sins, containing in its most unmingled form the essence of all sin, and auguring such alienation and aversion from the light as could only come from love of darkness. What must He have thought of Himself Who said that not to accept Him was the sin deserving the deepest condemnation? Note, too, the deep pathos of this lament, drawn like a sob from the heart of Jesus. The Judge weeps over the criminals, but His tears do not make Him falter in His judgment. Though Christ would—did—give His life to avert the ruin, He cannot, when He sits on the great white throne, turn the sentence away from those who have dragged it down on themselves by turning away from Him, proclaimed in their unbelieving ears.

Friday, 8th. *Luke x. 17 to 24.* The seventy return glad in the victories that they have wrought in His name. In a graphic and lucid sentence the Master utters a fact

of His own knowledge, a prophecy to all His workers. "I beheld Satan fallen as lightning from heaven." That is at once a declaration of the original fall, and of the certain ultimate conquest of evil. Men who work, serving under His commission, while glad, are yet astonished when the evil ones are defeated. To the eye of the Master that is always an accomplished fact. Satan has fallen, and the going out of all demons is a natural and necessary sequence. That is a great and mighty cause for joy, but there is a greater, that the names of men are written in that heaven from which Satan has fallen. That is the positive outlook. A heavenly people are being created, and the principal purposes of God are being realized. Truly no man ever spake as He spake, for none other had His vision of the things of God. If we cannot see as He saw, it is our privilege to accept His vision. Satan seems enthroned! It is not so. He is fallen from heaven, and the names of the redeemed are written there. The devil's defeat, and the saint's triumph are secure. So said the Master, and we believe.

From F. B. Meyer:

"I beheld Satan fallen as lightning from heaven" (R. V.). This was Christ's vision of the effect of His work in man's nature, and on man's behalf. For ages Satan had vaunted his power over man; but now and henceforward the demon-nature was to be vanquished by the name and nature of Jesus Christ. "The demons are subject to us in thy name." Whenever you are tempted by the demon of alcohol, of passion, of jealousy, or any other, claim instantly the protection of the name which is above every name; make the name and nature of Jesus your strong tower into which you shall run and be safe; realize all that He stands for, and you will find that the demons will be subject to you. In your life also, Satan will fall from heaven, and be trodden under your feet.

And what is true in your own life is true also of your influence over others. If you dare to live in the risen Christ, you share His empire and all the fruits of His victory over Satan. He gives you authority over serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy. The Christ nature within you becomes the dominant, triumphant power to which all power must ultimately lead. Dare to use it. In conflict with the demon spirits that haunt so many lives; in antagonizing the giant forces that are so strongly entrenched in our natural life, the ravages of vice—be sure to rely, not on numbers or organizations, but on the name of Jesus, used not as a charm, but as representing His living and ascended might.

Saturday, 9th. *Luke x. 25 to 37.* This story of the good Samaritan is our Lord's reply to the question of the lawyer—"Who is my neighbor?" He completely shifts the ground of the question. As the lawyer put it, it meant "Whom am I to love?" Notice that Jesus after uttering the parable says to His questioner, "Which of these three, thinkest thou, proved neighbor unto him that fell among the robbers?" And when the lawyer answered rightly, the Master said, "Go, and do thou likewise." That is to say, the question of importance is not "Who is my neighbor?" but "Whose neighbor am I?" The perpetual blunder man makes is that of seeking for neighbors. The whole mission of Jesus and of those also who serve Him is that of seeking those to whom to become neighborly. And when that outlook is found—which is never until the first great commandment of love to God is obeyed—then all along the highways of life we discover wounded, broken souls, in ministering to whom we fulfill the second word of all law, "Thou shalt love . . . . thy neighbor as thyself."

From Alexander Maclaren:

It makes a vast difference whether we say, "Who is my neighbor?" or "Whose neighbor am I?" for, although the relation is, of course, mutual, to approach it on the one side is selfishness, and on the other is love. The one fixes attention on men's claims on me, the other on my debts to them; and while these are the same, they have a very different aspect from the two ends. The truth, therefore, which Christ would have us learn is, that to be a true neighbor is to render help, and that we are neighbors to all men in such a sense that our compassion should go out to them all, and our practical aid be given, no matter what may be the barriers of race, or creed, or color, or distance. True love to men will cut its own channels, will not wait to be commanded, nor ask how far it is bound to go, but spontaneously and universally will own its kinship with all the needy and sad, and will seek to be as wide and deep as the love of God, of which it is a reflection.

Sunday, 10th. *Luke x. 38 to 42.* The "one thing needful" is that we should sit at the Master's feet and learn of Him! This is needful, first, for our sake. If we would be strong for service, with the strength

which prevents distraction and unrest; if we would be prepared for quietness of spirit even amid the most trying sorrows; if we would ever find our way into the sacred place of fellowship with His sufferings, we must make time to "sit at his feet" *as disciples*. It is needful also for His sake. He seeks and hungers after the companionship of those upon whom His love is set. To satisfy this desire of His, we must sometimes cease our working for Him, and breaking away from all other things, no matter how they press, we must *"sit at his feet" as worshipers.*

"Let me come closer to Thee, Jesus;
Oh! closer day by day,
Let me lean harder on Thee, Jesus,
Yea, harder all the way.

"Let me show forth Thy beauty, Jesus,
Like sunshine on the hills.
Oh! let my lips pour forth Thy sweetness
In joyous, sparkling rills.

"Yea, like a fountain precious, Jesus,
Make me and let me be;
Keep me and use me daily, Jesus,
For Thee, for only Thee.

"In all my heart and will, O Jesus,
Be altogether King.
Make me a loyal subject, Jesus,
To Thee in everything.

"Thirsting and hungering for Thee, Jesus,
With blessed hunger here,
Longing for Home on Zion's mountain,
No thirst, no hunger there."

—*Ignatius.*

From W. M. Hay Aitken:

There is something better than service; there is something grander than doing. It is well to serve; but better still to offer acceptable service. It is well to do; but it is better still to do things in the right way. What Martha needed was sympathy with Jesus Christ's spirit, to come within the charmed circle of His inner life—to understand His objects and aims, to appreciate His longing desire, not to feed Himself with outward food, but to feed a famishing world with the revelation of God in His human form. This was where Martha went wrong, and this where Mary went right.

Christian workers, let us learn our lesson. It is not enough to receive Jesus into our homes and into our lives—this we must do before anything else—but we need to sit at His feet, to gaze on His spiritual beauty, to hear His words, to yield ourselves wholly to His spiritual influence. Thus, and only thus, shall we find ourselves possessed of the one thing needful; and while hands, or feet, or brain, are busy, there shall be a great calm within; there will be speed without feverish haste, and activity without bustle, and our work shall become sabbatic, and our lives an unbroken sanctity. Whatever happens, let us not be too busy to sit at Jesus' feet.

Monday, 11th. *Luke xi. 1 to 13.* The praying of the Master inspired the disciples with a desire to pray, and they asked that they might be taught. He responds fully in a fourfold statement.

1. A model. This is not the Lord's prayer in the sense of being one which He used, but only in the sense of being given by Him to His disciples. He could not have used it as a whole. It is a model for the disciples. Note its character.

a. *The order of the petitions.* Divine things first, then human needs.

b. *Limitation of petition.* Bread for today only. Forgiveness for the forgiving.

c. *Recognition of brotherhood.* No pronoun of the third person is in the singular number.

2. The necessity for importunity. God willeth to be enquired of, and to the soul that clings in strong determination He gives answer.

3. The freedom of access. Ask. Seek. Knock.

4. The ground of confidence. Your fatherhood compels you to give to your children, and conditions your gift. When you have considered that picture, then remember you are evil, and hear the Master's question, *"How much more?"*

From Alexander Maclaren:

In what region of experience are these unconditional promises fulfilled? Surely not in this world of bitter disappointments, and baffled desires, and frustrated requests! It would be a questionable blessing if all our desires in regard to outward benefits were granted, and the Father in heaven would be less wise than many an earthly father, who knows that an indulged child is a "spoiled" child. The abounding promise is true absolutely in the spiritual realm, where fuller knowledge of God, a more Christ-like character, and more blessed communion with Him, wait for all who desire them and seek them in God's way. The closing analogy lifts the child's prayer to its true place. Mark the parallel between the "which of you" in the parable, and the "which of you" in verse 11 (R. V.). By the former our experience as petitioners is brought to illustrate the truth taught; by the latter, our experience as givers. Fatherly love is taken for granted; the thing

enforced is confidence in fatherly wisdom. Jesus charges "evil" on all men, and emphatically exempts Himself. And then He bids us not to think that the grudging giver of the parable represents God, but to take the purest, most unselfish love which we know, and purify it yet more by taking away all taint, and to think of that as a dim shadow of the infinite love and wisdom which in the heavens hears and answers our poor cries.

Tuesday, 12th. *Luke xi. 14 to 28.* In this passage our Lord teaches the impossibility of neutrality and the necessity for unity of purpose. "If Satan also is divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand?" "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth." The greatest hindrance to the progress of the kingdom of God on earth to-day is the attempt to use Satan to cast out Satan. Methods of work which are of the devil, and men in whom the power of evil still reigns, cannot help forward the work of God. I once remember when at school being one of twenty-one who wanted to play cricket. They divided for the match, and decided as I was an odd man I should field and bat for both sides. It did not work well for me, for that afternoon's fielding lingers in my memory still, and at the end of play I had made a score for the defeated ten, and nothing for the victorious side, so that I could not share the victory to which to which I had not contributed, nor boast of the score which was part of defeat. You cannot make runs for Christ and bowl for the devil.

From — Plummer:

Is there not written here very plainly the history of many a human soul ? Though we renounce the devil, he will not renounce us. He watches his opportunity, and comes back with sevenfold subtlety and violence, and quickly has us more completely in his power than before. He comes this time to *stay*. It is, perhaps, not our old sin that at once begins again; but new forms of sin less conspicuous, perhaps, but just as fatal, beset us—as the Jews, cured of the worship of idols, took to the worship of the letter of the law, and to covetousness, which is idolatry. The experience of thousands has proved that forces which are quite sufficient, even singly, to induce a man to abandon some sinful course, are unable even when combined, to keep him in the right way. It is only when Christ, through His Holy Spirit, is made a welcome tenant that the liberated soul is secure. Safety from Satan's bondage can be made sure in no other way than by abiding under the sway of Him Whose service is perfect freedom.

Wednesday, 13th. *Luke xi. 29 to 54.* This is a solemn section chronicling our Lord's denunciations. What a dual revelation we have in it. 1. Of our Lord's wonderful insight into the true condition of the age in which He lived and worked. 2. And of that condition.

Notice the threefold denunciation.

1. A generation seeking a sign, proving by that search how blind they are, that in very deed "the light that is in them is darkness."

2. The Pharisees punctiliously particular in the paltry matters of tithing mint and rue, and neglecting judgment and the love of God.

3. The lawyers binding heavy ceremonial burdens upon the people which they themselves lift not with one of their fingers.

Thus the blindness of the people is traced back to the blindness and willfulness of the leaders and teachers. In the public utterances of Jesus there is so much that should cause all those who teach to tremble under a sense of responsibility.

From J. Vaughan:

To what a height that inner "light" is capable of being raised by culture it is impossible for us to estimate, seeing no man has ever cherished it as he might. But did we pray, and study, and listen, and obey the "still, small voices" as we ought, there would be no limit to the degree in which the judgment would be directed, the heart softened, the will conformed, the thoughts made sunny, the future assured, the love of God dominant, and heaven foretasted. For "if the eye be single, the whole body is full of light." If the openings heavenward and Godward be all clear, and unchoked, and free, the whole man is capable, and wise, and happy, and safe; and that is fulfilled which we read so familiarly, and therefore so unintelligibly—"The path of the just is as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day." But it is a truth too certain, that all this "light," with which God beams upon us, is capable not only of being hindered, and resisted, and destroyed, but, worse than that, of actually being converted into a deeper "darkness" —becoming a medium of spiritual blindness, or casting the soul into a more utter night. For there is no death so locked as that which once lived the most; there is no blackness so black as the shrouded day; there is no soul so dark as the soul which was once illumined.

Thursday, 14th. *Luke xii. 1 to 12.* The enmity of the scribes and Pharisees is stirred against Him, and He knows that it will be also against the disciples who are to take up His testimony and continue it. These verses contain His words to them in view of this fact. They are not to fear opposition even though it end in killing them. The need of these words He understood as they did not then, for they had no conception of the fact that all of them save John would suffer a death of violence. They were only to fear Him Who has power to cast into hell. How sweetly our Lord then revealed the Father to them. 1. Not forgetful even of the sparrows. 2. Numbering the hairs of the heads of His own. He also stands before them for a moment in His coming glory, and gives them to see Him confessing them in the high courts of heaven. And again He tells them that the Spirit shall come and give them words to speak in the hour of their need and peril. What wonder is it that these men became the first heroes of the race in after days.

"Who follows in their train?"

Those and only those who have such a vision of Him in all His sufficiency as to make all other considerations secondary and all opposition occasion for victory in His strength.

From F. B. Meyer:

"Be not anxious." So often through this discourse the Lord refers to anxiety (vs. 11, 25, 26). There must have been a great strain on the crowds who listened to Him; and there was every likelihood of the strain becoming even greater for His disciples as the years passed on. So, also, the characteristic of our age is anxious strain.

But the heart of Jesus was always at peace. His life was calm amid the storms of life; as the coral island, with its fronded palms and lagoons of still water, is peaceful amid the storm-tossed ocean, because of the protection of its reef. The surf breaks there, but does not intrude further. The secrets of Jesus were the perpetual presence of God in His soul, and His never-faltering faith in the loving, careful providence of God in all the experiences of His checkered life.

Can we not have this? We may if we are willing to pay the price. If we will surrender our will utterly to Him; if we will tear down every vail that might hide His face, and throw open our whole being to His indwelling and use; if we will cease scheming, planning, devising, and fall back on the absolute care and arrangements of God; if we will learn to reckon on God as absolutely as on any resourceful human friend; if we will dare to believe that God holds Himself responsible for the sustenance and equipment for duty of all who absolutely seek His glory—then—

"Our lives shall be full of sunshine,
And the cares that infest the day
Shall fold up their tents like the Arabs,
And as silently steal away."

Friday, 15th. *Luke xii. 13 to 31.* The Master's address to His disciples is interrupted by one of the multitude. How fair the appeal sounds. It is a cry for justice. Jesus in a sentence reveals the whole man. Covetous! A desire to possess, not a hunger for principles of justice. How much seeming desire for strict justice is just a secret desire for self-enrichment. In a graphic parable our Lord gives us a picture of a man given over to covetousness, and we hear in startling words the Divine estimate of him, *"Thou fool!"* Turning again to His disciples He proves the folly of covetousness by a sweet and tender declaration of the thought and care of God for birds and flowers. In the thirtieth verse there is a contrast worth remembering, between the nations of the world and the followers of the Lord. "These things"—that is, the necessities of life—"the nations of the world *seek after.*" With the disciples it is different. "Your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things." In the first case anxiety, in the other rest in the assurance of the Father's provision. Then comes the instruction as to conduct, and the sure promise of Christ in which God is pledged to us. *"Seek ye his kingdom, and these things* shall be added unto you."

From Augustine:

God desires not that thou shouldst lose thy riches, but that thou shouldst change their place. He has given thee a counsel, which do thou understand. Suppose a friend should enter thy house, and should find that thou hadst lodged thy fruits on a damp floor, and he, knowing by chance the tendency of those fruits to spoil, whereof thou wert ignorant, should give thee counsel of this sort, saying: "Brother, thou losest the things which with great labor thou hast gathered; thou hast placed them in a damp place; in a few days they will corrupt." "And what, brother, shall I do?" "Raise them to a higher room"—thou wouldst listen to thy brother, suggesting

that thou shouldst raise thy fruits from a lower to a higher floor; and thou wilt not listen to Christ, advising that thou raise thy treasure from earth to heaven, where that will not, indeed, be restored to thee which thou layest up—for He bids thee lay up earth, that thou mayest receive heaven, lay up perishable things that thou mayest receive eternal.

Saturday, 16th. *Luke xii. 32 to 40.* A beautiful description of the true attitude of the disciples of Jesus. Let us take out the bold lines and look at them, and then turn again to the whole paragraph for the light and shade.

"Fear not."
"Sell . . . . and give."
"Loins girded about."
"Lamps burning."
"Men looking for their Lord."
"Be ye also ready."
"The Son of man cometh."

It is the attitude of expectant readiness. These are pilgrims and strangers, foreigners. Their country and home lie beyond the mists. Its light they already see. They are ready for departure HOME.

"Watch, brethren, watch! The year is dying;
Watch, brethren, watch! Old time is flying!
Watch as men watch the parting breath,
Watch as men watch for life or death.

"Look, brethren, look! The day is breaking;
Hark, brethren, hark! The dead are waking;
With girded loins all ready stand;
Behold, the Bridegroom is at hand!"

From J. C. Ryle:

The standard of life which our Lord has set up here is an exceedingly high one,—so high, indeed, that many Christians are apt to flinch from it, and feel cast down. And yet there is nothing here which ought to make a believer afraid. Readiness for the return of Christ to this world implies nothing which is impossible and unattainable. It requires no angelic perfection. It requires no man to forsake his family, and retire into solitude. It requires nothing more than the life of repentance, faith and holiness. The man who is living the life of faith in the Son of God is the man whose "loins are girded," and whose "light is burning." Such a man may have the care of kingdoms on him, like Daniel, or be a servant in a Nero's household, like some in Paul's time. All this matters nothing. If he lives looking unto Jesus, he is a servant who can "open to him immediately." Surely it is not too much to ask Christians to be men of this kind. Surely it was not for nothing that our Lord said, "The Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not."

Sunday, 17th. *Luke xii. 41 to 48.* In answer to Peter's question the Lord gives another aspect of Christian life. These words concerning a pilgrim and waiting character are spoken to those who are stewards of the things of God. The watching is to be that of faithfully discharging the duties of the hour. Notice particularly that our Lord teaches here that the attitude of waiting for Him is the only one that ensures fidelity. The servant who abuses his trust, beating the menservants and the maidservants, eating, drinking, and becoming drunk, is the one who says, "My lord delayeth his coming." The abuse of trust, the unfaithfulness, the low levels of living within the borders of the Church are, to an extent very little appreciated, the outcome of the loss by the Church of the hope of the Lord's return, and her consequent departure from the pilgrim character. The call that we need to hear to-day is to trimming of lamps and girding of loins, and thank God the cry is being heard on every hand. Where we wait for Him, we shall be what we should be in personal character, and we shall deal as we ought with others. Expectation of Him is indeed a purifying hope.

From George Bowen:

How everything in this world wears the appearance of a house the master of which is far away; as good as dead. Every one doeth that which is right in his own eyes, and goeth about as though he himself had inherited all authority. They say: "Our Lord delayeth His coming, and there is not the slightest likelihood that He will come in our days. He hath stationed no guard to interfere with us; we have liberty; let us avail ourselves of it." But there is a little band who keep on watching, amid all the confusion and iniquity around them. They go about all their appointed occupations, just as though the Lord were there, looking on; not sparing themselves, not seeking their own, putting up with insults and injuries, multiplying their labors; introducing improvements into their way of doing things, increasing in skill, in patience, in success, as months and years roll on. What is the secret spring of their conduct? It is twofold. By faith they know that their Lord sees them, even now, and is acquainted with all their ways; and they know also that

He cometh, none can say how soon, to take unto Him His great power and reign.

Monday, 18th. *Luke xii. 49 to 59.* By comparing verse 49 with Luke iii. 16 and Acts ii. 3, it will be seen that the fire to which Christ refers is that of the Holy Spirit. He cannot cast this fire upon the earth until He has passed through the passion baptism of the cross. Until that baptism He is "straitened." Thank God that baptism is now accomplished, and the fire has come, and He is no longer "straitened." All the Divine compassion has found its expression in the awful hours of the cross; and the mighty work of atonement being accomplished, that compassion has been set free to flow forth through the work of the Holy Spirit. The results have been as He said, division of families and households. And it goes forward until this time. Wherever souls are baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire, they are brought into separation to Christ, and the children of darkness have no understanding of the children of light. In this age of calling out a people to Himself, the rejected King is winning a rejected Bride, and is fitting her for Himself by the fire in which as in a furnace He burns up the dross and purifies the gold, the fire of the Holy Spirit.

From J. C. Ryle:

Have we no signs of the times to observe? The question is soon answered. The history of the last hundred years is full of events which demand the prayerful attention of every servant of Christ. The things that have happened within these years ought to send us to our watch-towers, and raise in us great searchings of heart. The rise and progress of a missionary spirit among all Protestant churches; the widespread interest felt about the Jews; the evident decay of the Mahometan power; the extraordinary spread of knowledge and education; the steady growth of the most subtle forms of infidelity,—all these are facts which cannot be denied, and facts which ought to speak loudly to every well-informed Christian. Surely they deserve to be called signs of our times.

Let us remember the words of our Lord in the passage before us, and not err after the manner of the Jews. Let us not be blind, and deaf, and insensible to all that God is doing, both in the Church and in the world. The things of which we have just been reminded are surely not without meaning. They have not come on the earth by chance of accident, but by the appointment of God. We ought not to doubt that they are a call to watchfulness, and to preparation for the day of God. May we all have an ear to hear, and a heart to understand. May we not sleep as do many, but watch and discern our time. It is a solemn saying in the book of Revelation, "If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee."

Tuesday, 19th. *Luke xiii. 1 to 9.* How often we have fallen into the error of imagining that those who suffer in some catastrophe are "sinners above all." The Lord here corrects that view. He denies that they were "sinners above all," and distinctly declares that all who repent not, shall "in like manner perish." His clear vision saw the means of death as a very small matter to the awful perishing that lay beyond. In the parable of the barren fig tree He lays down most distinctly the principles of life and of judgment. Its first application was to the Jewish nation, its teaching touches individual life also.

1. God, the Proprietor, seeks fruit.
2. Christ, the Intercessor, interferes, not for the lowering of the Divine claim, but in order to its realization.
3. Judgment falls upon those who fail to realize the Divine purpose even after the ministry of Jesus.
4. In that judgment He is at one with the Proprietor.

How solemn this teaching of the perfect unity existing between the Father and the Son. One in the purpose of fruit. Agreed in the process of grace. United in the final judgment.

From Samuel Cox:

We are too apt, when we see any forlorn and solitary brother sitting, like Job, among the potsherds, to sit down beside him, like Job's comforter, and hand him the very roughest and sharpest of the sherds that he may scrape himself withal. We are too apt, when any calamity befalls our neighbors, to assume that they must be sinners above all other men, and to speculate—sometimes in their hearing—on the crimson and scarlet dyes of their guilt. We need, therefore, to remember that accidents are not judgments, that accidents are not even *accidents,* since they are all ordered of God, and form part of that gracious discipline by which He lifts us through the graduated and rising circles of His service. They are sent for *our* sakes, who only stand and witness them, as well as for the sakes of those who suffer

them; not that we may judge others, but that we may examine ourselves.

Wednesday, 20th. *Luke xiii. 10 to 17.* This is another glorious picture containing three full length portraits.

1. Jesus. Seeing the whole need of this poor, afflicted soul, and feeling the weight of it on His heart, see the force of the interjection, *"Lo,* these eighteen years." Her need compelling His help, as an absolute necessity, see the inference of the word, *"Ought* not this woman," etc. Tender, compassionate, strong One!

2. The ruler. A cold formalist, more careful about the wretched details of ecclesiasticism than about human agony. Oh, the ungodlikeness of much that claims to be jealousy of the Divine honor! How far more to the heart of God was the relief of this suffering one than the observance of a day.

3. The woman. "A daughter of Abraham," under the power of evil. Helpless, and yet in the synagogue. True to the light she had, she found the clearer light, and shared in the blessing promised to her father, Abraham. It is good to read that for once His adversaries were put *to shame.*

From — Laidlow:

Let us note the spiritual lesson of the woman's story. She had come to her accustomed place in the synagogue in spite of all weariness and difficulty; and a blessed piece of work it was for her. Had she not gone that day to the place of worship, it is next to certain she had never met with Jesus. In the way of her usual waiting upon God—a troublesome routine it might have seemed to many—she got the blessing; not merely relief from her bodily chain, but, if we have read her character aright, the glorious liberty of those who saw in Jesus Christ the Lord's salvation. What good cheer is in the story for those who, amid bodily infirmities, mental oppression, or household burdens and afflictions—tempting them to defer their duty to God's house—find their way statedly thither. Every minister knows that these are often the most blest of all the company that gathers in God's house. For the Master of the house sees them and calls them to Him. To the drooping spirit, to the burdened heart of those who come there just because He bids them, He oft comes, as it were, all unbidden, and makes them glad with an unexpected visitation.

Thursday, 21st. *Luke xiii. 18 to 21.* Luke links these two parables of the kingdom with the rejoicing of the multitude "for all the glorious things that were done by him." This is very significant. These parables teach two things concerning the kingdom. That of the tree teaches the growth of the kingdom into a great power in the age, and that of the leaven its corruption. These He uttered because of the rejoicing crowd. Note the "therefore" of verse 18. He saw how very much on the surface lay that gladness, and that very soon the crowds would turn against Him, and raise the howl for His death; and He knew, moreover, how in the succeeding centuries there would be much applause of His work, by people in whom the principles of His kingdom had found no deep root. Is it not so to-day? There is a vast amount of patronage of Jesus which is more injurious than open opposition. The birds of the air are indeed lodging in the branches of the tree at this time, and polluting it, and the woman has hidden the leaven which has brought fermentation into the whole.

From R. Flint:

The whole of Christianity, in so far as it is true, once lay in a small compass. All the truths, all the institutions, all the virtues which it embodies, may be traced back to a single life as their germ. The mustard-tree was wholly in the mustard-seed. The oak, great although it now is, once lay wrapped up entire in the acorn. All that properly belongs to it lay folded there. Nothing save what is foreign and hurtful, nothing save excrescences and parasites, have come from any other source. The influences of light, and heat, and wind, and dew, have only brought out what was there from the first. It is so, likewise, with Christianity. It has grown up through eighteen hundred years, it covers now a very large portion of the earth, but all that truly belongs to it sprung from the lowly life of Jesus. All that is good in its creeds, its institutions, the conduct it inspires, has germinated from some word of His—has lain as a thought in His mind or an affection in His heart; and whatever man has introduced of his own into religious belief or practice is only an excrescence, a parasite, a cause of weakness and decay. The lowliest life ever lived on earth has thus been infinitely the most fruitful. The least of all seeds has become the greatest among herbs.

Friday, 22nd. *Luke xiii. 22 to 35.* There are limits to mercy. "Many . . . . shall seek to enter in and shall not be able." This will never be until "the master of the house hath risen up, and hath shut to the

door." This He will not do until men have proved by the calm and determined choice of their own character that they are "workers of iniquity." It is against such, and such only, that the door is shut. The same truth is evident in the sad wail that surged in sorrow from His heart over Jerusalem. He had waited and wooed for long season. Now the house is left desolate, because Jerusalem "would not." She did not desire Him, and would not obey the tender pleading of her Lover. Because of this, the door is shut, and the nation is rejected. Yes, there are limits to mercy and they lie exactly at the point where character has finally rejected God. Where that point may lie as to time, for us individually, who shall tell? Yet note that even amid the desolation He sounds the note of hope for Jerusalem. There is a day in which she shall lift her head and know her Deliverer and say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

Selected:

The guests who obtain admittance are those who *"strive"*—those who are really in earnest in religion and put forth their whole strength to secure entrance into the kingdom of heaven. They realize the greatness of the blessings which it implies, and are determined to make them their own; they discern the obstacles that lie in the way of the fulfillment of their desire, and resolutely overcome them. "To strive" implies not only great, but also sustained effort,—an attitude and endeavor steadily maintained from day to day. Religion, therefore, is not merely a mood belonging to special times and occupations, but it is an influence that should tell upon every department of the life. While doing *many* things, the Christian can still be bent upon doing the *one* thing; in all that engages his attention and employs his powers he can find opportunity for honoring and serving God. Genuine holiness is a distinguishing mark of those who are guests in the heavenly kingdom. It is the result of their humility and faith and endeavor, and qualifies them to partake of those spiritual blessings which God has reserved for them that love Him.

Saturday, 23rd. *Luke xiv. 1 to 14.* Nothing escaped the notice of Jesus. In the house of the Pharisees He noted two principal facts and spoke concerning each. He watched the guests choosing the chief seats and rebuked them, incidentally revealing the true law of precedence. The more honorable man is to have the highest place. He then turns to the host and tells him that true hospitality cares for the needy. How much we have still to learn from the Nazarene in these matters of behavior. The order of precedence in Britain depends still on letters, patent and custom, and never on character; and thus men still seek the chief seats. Apply the law of hospitality as enunciated by Jesus to much that passes by that name to-day. Verse 12. "Call not . . . . *lest haply they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee.*" Christ speaks as though the one thing to be feared is that the invitation should be returned. How does this compare with the ordinary run of these affairs now? Precedence should ever be to character, and hospitality that can be recompensed is cancelled.

From William M. Taylor:

The Christian in society is always being watched. Men are taking knowledge of him all the time. They take note how he conducts his business; they scrutinize his behavior at the feast, or in the social circle; they notice how he behaves himself at the summer hotel, or on board ship, or wherever he may be. Would that he could always stand that ordeal as the Lord Himself did in the house of this Pharisee.

My brethren, when so many are on the watch for our stumbling, how much need is there for us to take heed to ourselves! Let us seek by prayerful realization of the presence of the Lord with us, to be Christians wherever we are; and then not only shall we save ourselves, but we may also be the means of salvation to others. In our speech let us be reverent and discreet; in our business let us be unswerving in our integrity; in our conduct let us be unselfish, and thoughtfully considerate for others' welfare; in our general deportment let us be humble, earnest, holy, and devout; and then men shall take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus, and even our enemies "shall not find any occasion against us, except they find it against us concerning the law of our God."

Sunday, 24th. *Luke xiv. 15 to 24.* One of the guests moved by the words of the Master said, "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God." This was almost certainly an honest and sincere exclamation. It is as if a vision of the perfection of behavior in that kingdom passed before his mind, and hence his exclamation. Jesus took the man at his word, and in the parable which follows revealed the true ideals as realized in the Divine action. The

guests which furnish the table are the men of character, and as circumstances proved are found largely in the most unexpected quarters. Character is created and manifested by submission to the will of God. The Divine hospitality is extended to those who are in need, and in such a way that recompense is absolutely out of the question. The teaching of the parable in the higher spiritual realm is very solemn as it reveals the depravity and waywardness of the human heart, and its pride also, in turning from the great provision of God to matters of trivial importance. So trivial are the things that attract from God's great provisions, that men have to lie about them before they even pass muster as excuses. What foolish lying it was to say that a field is to be seen, and oxen proved, *after* they were bought!

From Alexander Maclaren:

The vagrants who house in the fields and under the hedges historically represent the Gentiles outside the polity of Israel. But the representation embodies the great truth of which transference of the offer of salvation to them was but an exemplification; namely, the destination of the gospel for all, and its special mission to the lowest. The increase in urgency corresponds to the distance from the banquet and the degradation of the invited. First, the message was a simple "Come"; then, it was to be a "Bring" them in; and now, it is, "Constrain them." The pleading earnestness increases with the need and the sense of unfitness for so great an honor. How grand and wonderful a view of the Divine longing to bestow blessings lies in that word, given as the motive of the host's command, "that my house may be filled." God cannot be satisfied with empty spaces at His table. He does not rest till all the ample spaces are crowded with "the great multitude, which no man can number," so all-embracing is His love, so strong His desire to impart the bread, enough and to spare, which He has prepared for all the hungry.

Monday, 25th. *Luke xiv. 25 to 35.* No one who has studied the words of Jesus will ever be able to say that the difficulties of the Christian life were not explicitly stated. This paragraph is a wonderful instance. In verses 25 and 26 the cost of discipleship is stated. Severance from every earthly tie to follow Jesus, and the actual cross to be borne. Without these conditions being fulfilled there can be no discipleship. He then urges the multitudes to count the cost of the step that they seem to contemplate. Let no one play with discipleship. It is a stern reality, making demands upon all the affections, and calling to certain suffering; and this in order to the exercise of an influence upon society at large. If men take the name of the Christ, and do not exert a power that is antiseptic and purifying, the Lord says they are as savorless salt, fit only to be cast out! It is well for every one of us at times very solemnly to ask ourselves what is the supreme and dominant affection in our lives. If it be any other than that of love to Him, we need tremble, for love to Him is the only motive that so purifies all life as to make it antiseptic.

From F. B. Meyer:

"He cannot be my disciple." Three times Christ repeats these solemn words; and it may be that earnest men have done injury to His cause, which they desired to serve, by omitting these stringent conditions in their gospel invitations. It is quite true that whosoever will may come and take; that whosoever believeth in Him shall never perish; that the door of mercy stands open wide. But it is equally true that the faith that saves must pass such tests as these, and if it does not, it is not of the quality which can bear the soul through the swelling billows of the river of death. These three tests may be classified thus:—

Separation.—It sometimes happens in the disciple's life that Christ's work lies in one direction, whilst the blessed ties of home lie in another. Tender voices call; loving hands reach out to hold him. Here the plough is waiting in its furrow; there the hearth with its tender memory and association. At such times, for the true man, there can be but one choice.

Crucifixion.—Every one has his own cross —some one thing in which the will of God crosses his will. Jesus made that cross, and bids us take it up and bear it after Himself. Yet how many evade it, flee from it, postpone it. They think they can follow Him apart from it; but it is impossible. We can only follow the Crucified when we bear each his own cross. And to shrink from it shows that we are not disciples.

Renunciation.—All we have must be gladly yielded when Christ asks for it. If the accumulation of a life be in one scale and Christ in the other, we must choose Christ, come what may to the rest, or we must abandon our title to discipleship.

Tuesday, 26th. *Luke xv. 1 to 10.* These three parables are in reality one, manifesting the work of grace, each dealing with a

different aspect thereof. They form a wonderful revelation of the Divine heart. In each the greatest joy is shown to be that of God. The rejoicing that is deepest is that of the shepherd, the woman, the father. In the first (vs. 4-7), we have the aspect of grace as revealed in the work of the Son. He came to seek and save the lost. There is no effort here on the part of the sheep to return. Man is viewed in his lost condition only, and God is revealed seeking him afar and restoring him. In the second (vs. 8-10), we have the aspect of grace as revealed in the work of the Spirit. He seeks amid the darkness and desolation for the lost. Man has no activity here either, God is revealed patiently seeking him even when there is as yet no desire on his part. These two pictures are most precious, revealing the Divine compassion and concern, and they prepare the way for the third.

"He saw us ruined in the fall,
Yet loved us notwithstanding all."

From Arthur Mursell:

"Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost." The shepherd's heart is too full to keep the gladness to himself. There is such chainless ecstacy thrilling in his soul that he must have all his friends about him to help him in his triumphant celebration. What condescension is there in this sympathy! Oh, could we but gauge the satisfaction with which Jesus will look upon "the travail of his soul," then we should know something of the depth of the love with which He loves us! But the ocean is too wide for our gaze to see the further shore, it is too deep for our poor plummet to fathom. We cannot know the bitterness of the cup He drank to the foul dregs; we cannot feel the agony which the sleeping disciples might not watch, when the drops of blood were sweat upon the ground; we cannot tell the galling stab of nail and thorn and spear, nor lift the weight of the rough, crushing cross. No; we cannot understand the huge encyclopedia of Calvary, nor study to the full profundity of its melting lore the lexicon of dying love; and so we cannot measure out the joy with which the purchase of that death will be received, and the trophies of that tragedy be counted up. But we shall be allowed to *share* in it. Not only shall we be rejoiced over, but we shall rejoice over others.

Wednesday, 27th. *Luke xv. 11 to 24.* This third parable reveals the aspect of grace as revealed in the love of the Father. A love that was always set upon the sinner, and followed him to the far country, waiting for his home-coming, and then shining out in its greatest brilliancy in the welcome given, so overwhelming in its tenderness and riches. In this picture the element of will in the life of the sinner is introduced. The perversion of will took him away from home to the far country. It was necessary that there should be a return of the will to allegiance, and this is shown in the conviction, and repentance, and return. How that was brought about is taught by the foregoing parables of the shepherd going to the wilderness, and the woman sweeping in the house. The Divine love is the theme of this whole discourse. Love goes to the wilderness, continues to seek, welcomes home. All is of grace.

"Grace! 't is a charming sound,
Harmonious to the ear;
Heaven with the echo shall resound,
And all the earth shall hear."

From C. B. Marston:

It is of the first consequence that action should follow resolution. In any case, if a man makes a resolution that is worth anything, the sooner he puts it into action the better; and, of all the characteristics which call out admiration, this is above all others—decision; and the man who knows not only how to decide, but how to act upon his decision, is the man whom others most approve; that is the man to deserve our confidence, and the man to get it. And therefore the Lord draws a perfect picture, not simply of an awakened man, but of a man who feels pressure; not only of a man who resolves that something must be done to relieve this pressure, but one who gets up and does it; a man who acts; a man who knows how to do that which he has resolved to do—"He arose and came to his father."

Thursday, 28th. *Luke xv. 25 to 32.* This man is always spoken of as the elder brother. It is somewhat significant that he is not so called in the narrative. The prodigal is spoken of as brother to this man, and he is called the elder son, but his conduct forfeited his right to be called a brother. We have been very angry with him, more so than the father was. The whole tone of the father's words seems to speak of pity, rather than anger. We should never discountenance the value of persistent loyalty, nor should we put a premium on prodigality. If this story has one lesson more important than others it is that of the possibility of living in the Father's house and

yet failing to understand His heart. This resulted in this son's hankering after a kid to make merry with friends when all that the father had was his. How perpetually we are in danger of losing sight of all we possess in the vain desire for something we fancy we ought to have.

From F. B. Meyer:

The elder brother is the dark contrast which heightens the glowing picture of the repentant prodigal; as the gargoyle does the beauty of the angel faces on the cathedral font.

When we look at sin, not in its theological aspects, but in its everyday clothes, we find that it divides itself into two kinds. We find that there are sins of the body and sins of the disposition; or more narrowly, sins of the passion, including all forms of lust and selfishness, and sins of the temper. The prodigal is *the* instance in the New Testament of sins of the passion —the elder brother of sins of temper. Now we might be disposed to think that the prodigal is the worse sinner of these two; but it is at least worthy of remark that as the story ends, we see him found, forgiven, restored; whilst the elder brother is still outside the house, and an absentee from the feast. Does Christ mean that the ill-tempered murmuring of the Pharisee is more hopeless than the passion of the publican and sinner? We must not press the thought too far; but we may at least ask whether we are harboring, beneath a very respectable moral exterior, the spirit of the elder brother, who plods daily to work and is accounted a paragon of filial dutifulness, but is left without the door. Let us carefully read our hearts, lest there be any trace of this spirit in ourselves, when others are pressing into the kingdom with joy.

Friday, 29th. *Luke xvi. 1 to 12.* There has seemed to be a difficulty in the minds of some with regard to this parable, as though Christ should appear to justify dishonesty under certain conditions. The Master has a lesson to teach His disciples on the subject of earthly wealth, and He makes use of this unjust steward for purposes of illustration. "He no more designs, by introducing and comparing him to a true Christian to approve of him, than He intends to approve of the unjust judge, when He compares God, as the hearer of prayer, to him" (Kirk). The element in his actions that Jesus commends is that of his foresight, preparing for coming emergencies, and He proceeds to indicate the possibilities that lie within the reach of those who have wealth committed to their trust. It is when we recognize all the gifts and opportunities of to-day, as having their relation to the eternity to come that we shall use them rightly. To turn our back upon the light of the future is to throw our shadow upon the present, and so to make that blurred and indistinct. We should rather face the future and put everything between us and it, that so its light may reveal to us the true value and proportion of all present things.

From J. Vaughan:

"That which is your own." The sound is pleasant to the ear. The lust of possessing is an instinct of nature. It waits not for the developed covetings of manhood. Even our own souls are not yet our own. They are "our own" only at last, as the prize of the lifelong conflict, the stake of the game in which the man and the man's enemy are at play. This makes life so serious, so momentous,—the risk of not "gaining" as "our own," our own souls! The soul itself is not "yet" our own; it depends upon the life, the life earthward and heavenward, the life towards man, and the life towards God. To the good steward, when all fails him, and the stewardship of the long past must be accounted for, he shall find himself for the first time as an owner, the soul, the self, the redeemed and sanctified nature, being at last given him for his own. This is the gospel for which we can never be too thankful, of the new ideal of life as Jesus Christ taught, exemplified, and inspires it in His people. Life a trust; all that life has for us, another's; we ourselves stewards, not owners, required, aroused, and enabled to be faithful. Our Lord appeals to this very lust of possessing. We must wish to possess. Only the fool and the mammon-worshiper can be indifferent to the question, "Who will give you that which is your own?"

Saturday, 30th. *Luke xvi. 13 to 18.* "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." There can be no doubt as to which I am to serve. What then is my relation to mammon? It is to serve me as I serve God. God being supreme, I become His steward, and my use of wealth is to be conditioned by my loyalty to Him. No man has ever been harmed by possessing money, the harm is wrought by money possessing the man. The Pharisees scoffed at Jesus when He gave them this teaching. Why? Because they "were lovers of money." To love money is to give yourself to it, to become its slave, and so make it impossible to serve God. To love God is to serve Him, and to use money for His glory, and so keep it in its

proper place, that of subjection. The influence of wealth is so subtle that there is much wisdom in the prayer of Agur:—

"Give me neither poverty nor riches,
Feed me with the food that is needful for me,
Lest I be full, and deny thee, and say,
Who is the LORD?
Or lest I be poor and steal,
And use profanely the name of my God."

From J. C. Ryle:

The honor of God's holy law was frequently defended by Christ during the time of His ministry on earth. Its ceremonial part was a type of His own gospel, and was to be fulfilled to the last letter. Its moral part was a revelation of God's eternal mind, and was to be perpetually binding on Christians. The honor of God's holy law needs continually defending in the present day. On few subjects does ignorance prevail so widely among professing Christians. Some appear to think that Christians have nothing to do with the law,—that its moral and ceremonial parts were both of only temporary obligation,—and that the daily sacrifices and the ten commandments were both alike put aside by the gospel. Some on the other hand think that the law is still binding on us, and that we are to be saved by obedience to it,—but that its requirements are lowered by the gospel, and can be met by our imperfect obedience. Both these views are erroneous and unscriptural. Against both let us be on our guard. Let us settle it in our minds that "the law is good if a man use it lawfully." It is intended to show us God's holiness and our sinfulness,—to convince us of sin and to lead us to Christ,—to show us how to live after we have come to Christ, and to teach us what to follow and what to avoid. He that so uses the law will find it a true friend to his soul. The established Christian will always say, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man."

Sunday, 31st. *Luke xvi. 19 to 31.* In this narrative of the life and death of two men we have a solemn and awful picture of the life beyond. It is seen as connected with, and growing out of the life here, and will repay attentive and prayerful study alone. It is of very great importance that it follows closely upon our Lord's teaching about mammon. One of the most urgent of its lessons is that if a man have wealth it is positively a sin for him to use it for his own luxury and ease, while he is unmindful of the wounds and need that lie at his very gate. The crumbs that fall from his table and which he does not need or miss, are not sufficient. The self-centered life that is forgetful of others, leads swiftly and surely to hell. Money possessing a man is the direst curse, for it hardens his heart and paralyzes all his noblest powers. Money possessed by a God-possessed man is the sweetest blessing, for it becomes the means of expressing the tenderness of his heart towards his fellows. A radiant beam of light falls through this narrative upon the future life of the godly. There is to be the recompense of present privation. The compensations of God's afterward will far outweigh the afflictions of the "little while."

Selected:

It is the teaching of modern science that no force is lost in the universe. It may be changed into other forces, but its equivalent is perpetuated. Nothing is lost in the hard domain of matter. Is it likely that anything is lost in the sensitive realm of mind? Let us not think that the mental history of our life is to be lost. Great libraries have been lost and scholars have wept, but the book of the human soul has not yet been destroyed, and all its obscure passages will yet be illumined. All that is needed is a sensation strong enough to bring the past to life. The judgment bar of Christ will make us remember. What a terrible retribution would be the giving of a lost soul to the contemplation of himself! With what anguish would he look on his own vanished years! "Sad memory weaves no veil to hide the past." Hour after hour, year after year, the past life is unfolded, and in the midst of that past he beholds the form of Jesus and seems to hear His words of sorrow and of doom,—"All thy life long have I stretched My hands to thee, and thou wouldst not."